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Vol. VIII.

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VICTORIA.

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VICTORIA.

It has been so ordained by Providence, that I—who am a native of one of the most solitary valleys of our fair island, and whose earliest years were spent in a retirement almost as absolute as that of a recluse of the Chartreuse, having little intercourse but with the wild beauties of Nature and the dusty volumes of an old library, supposed to have belonged to a friend of Addison—should in my later years have become a great traveller, having visited three quarters of the globe, and been resident in various climates, from the burning torrid zone to the northern borders of England; having at one time been surrounded by idolaters and followers of the prophet Mahomet, and at another finding myself in the assemblies of comparatively pure and simple Protestants—that is, of persons who profess to take the Holy Scriptures as their rule of life; and again being mixed up in one household with Roman Catholics, which last are persons bearing indeed the name of Christian, but having many of the errors of the heathen, together with the pride and self-righteousness of the Mussulman. In all these situations it has been my pleasure to study the characters of children, and to observe their various trials and circumstances of life; and these observations have led me to conclude that many and terrible evils accrue to them from their intercourse with servants, and especially with servants in countries where the national religion is false, and the language different from that commonly used by their parents.

I have already given examples of this kind in my Narratives of Indian Life. It is now my intention to bring forward another example which has come to my knowledge during my residence in a place much nearer home; and I should rejoice to find that the instance

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which I am about to adduce is a singular one; that it is not so, I have reason however to fear; but I trust, that the history which I propose to bring forward will induce Christian parents to watch more carefully than many have hitherto done respecting the characters and religious opinions of those to whom they intrust their little ones.

Victoria is the name of the little girl whose history I am about to relate. It may perhaps be thought too fine a name for any but a princess, and scarcely fit for one descended from a family which is neither royal nor noble; but this will presently be explained.

There is little question but that you, my young reader, have heard of the town of Nice. A person travelling from the south of France into Italy, having crossed the river Var, enters at once into a small province under the King of Sardinia, to which the name of Niké, now Nice, was given, by an ancient Grecian colony: this colony took possession of it from Marseilles, above three centuries before the birth of our Lord. It lies on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea; and the Alps, that range of mountains which extend from the sea into Germany, and which in this place are called the Maritime Alps, so enclose this territory by their various branches as to form of it a little world of itself. This city of Nice, which was founded, as I before said, by the Greeks from Marseilles, afterward fell under the Romans, who had a magnificent seat near to it, of which vestiges still remain; in later times it became the property of the Counts of Provence, and it is now a part of the dominions of the King of Sardinia; its established religion being Roman Catholic, and the people being subjected to a very severe discipline, under the authority of the priests, insomuch that there are few countries on the continent, with the exception of Spain and Portugal, to which less liberty of Conscience is allowed.

But this little territory being enclosed, as I said before, by the Maritime Alps, and being thus sheltered on three sides from the winds, and being also much nearer the course of the sun than we are in England, cold is as little felt through all its charming coasts as in many places on the torrid zone; hence, the olive-trees and cypresses which adorn its heights being ever green, it presents on every side prospects so charming, that a person who has learned to see the Creator in his works

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finds himself continually drawn out in acts of praise in beholding these manifold wonders of the Divine handiwork; for, to the instructed mind, the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament telleth his handiworks, although it is to be feared that there are many to whom their language is unintelligible. But if the arrangement of hill and dale, with the various points of view in which the sea intrudes itself into the landscape, is supremely beautiful throughout this small territory, the various brilliant colours which blend themselves in every prospect add greatly to the marvellous effects of every scene; the clear bright blue of the heavens, the deep green of the ocean, the glittering hue of the white foam, which forms a line along the bay, the violet tint of the distant mountains, and the browner glow of those which are nearer, with not unseldom the addition of some far distant snow-crowned peak,—and all these seen, as they often are, over groves of orange-trees, which might vie with the gardens of the Hesperides,—form a whole which can hardly be imagined by persons who have always inhabited a northern region, where, if the natural beauties are not inferior, they are undoubtedly of a very different character. Nor are all the beauties of this place such as would meet the eye of a traveller at once, for one of the remarkable features of this sequestered spot, this mountain region, which is thus protected from the winds of the north, is the amazing quantity of flowers which are found on the sides of the hills; here are anemones of every colour, sown in the earth, and springing forth in the early part of the year without the assistance of man's hand; long ranges of aloes are seen on the acclivities of the rocks where no human foot can tread. The arbutus, too, is here in abundance with its wax-like blossoms, and the sweet acacia, shedding perfumes in every breeze from its golden tassels. The almond-tree, which is the first to blossom after the cold season, for which it has been chosen in Scripture as the emblem of the guardian of the church who watches and wakes, is found also in this climate; and the vine which gives its blood for the refreshment of man, and the tall majestic cypress, all these are here, nor is there a cottage garden in which they are not assembled, with thousands of lesser shrubs, which if I could enumerate, I should be wiser than Solomon, who knew every plant from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop on the wall. But that

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which is the principal among the trees at Nice is the olive, of which groves of an immense extent cover the mountains; and as the almond and vine are used in Scripture for highly important emblems, so is the olive also chosen as the figure of a church supposed to be richly endued with the graces of the Spirit; and for this reason, because its berries produce a delicate oil, which is of great value to the owners of the trees.

The leaves of this tree are narrow and glossy, and are of a dark green on one side and of a white colour on the other: hence, when the sun shines, and the leaves are agitated by the breeze, the whole tree seems to glisten as with dew. Such as I have endeavoured to describe it is the country about Nice; I say less of the town, which is built on the side of a mountain torrent called the Paglion.

This bed of the torrent, which is very wide and strong, is generally nearly dry; but when there has been rain in the mountains, or at the time of the melting of the snows in the higher regions, the waters come roaring down with a great noise, and meeting those of the sea, the waves are troubled, and the confluence is terrible. There are also a high rock and a castle on one side of the town; but as these things are not particularly to our purpose, we will leave them for the present.

Now, because Nice is so warm and healthy, many English families come here to spend the winter. They generally take ready-furnished houses, and hire servants for the time being. These servants are generally thought tolerably honest, but their manners are rough and unpleasant; they speak bad French to their masters, their own language being unintelligible even to persons who understand French. This language, which in the mountains is well preserved, is the language of Provence—the language, in fact, of the ancient troubadours, or minstrels, as has been proved by comparing it with what remains of the poems of these renowned bards. This language is nearly lost in Provence itself, by having been mixed with the French; and it is in the same danger in Nice from the mixture with Italian. Having, however, so far explained the nature of the place which is the scene of my history, I hope, without further loss of time, to proceed to my narrative.

It happened some years ago—I should prefer not to say how many—that a certain English family, having

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resolved to spend some years on the Continent, came to Nice, and being pleased with the place, took a house, resolving to spend their winters there and their summers in Switzerland, or wherever else they might find it agreeable.

The family was large: it consisted of a Mr. and Mrs. Rosebury, whom we must consider as the principal persons; Mrs. Morley, the mother of Mrs. Rosebury; Mr. Morley her brother, and two younger sisters; added to these were two children of Mr. and Mrs. Rosebury; the eldest, whose name was George, being about eleven years of age at the time his father left England, and the second, Julia, being about nine. There had been two sons younger than Julia, who had died in infancy; and Mrs. Rosebury was expecting an addition to her family when she arrived at Nice. With respect to the characters of this family, I may sum them up very shortly.

Of the old lady I shall say little, but that she bought a new wig at Paris, and attended the theatre every night during her residence there. Of her son Mr. Morley, that he was a bachelor of about forty, who was very exact in his dress, very particular respecting his horses, and one who must have his game of cards every evening. Of Mr. Rosebury, that he was a mild amiable man, and very much under the influence of his wife. And of Mrs. Rosebury, that she was a woman of a strong mind, which had been perverted by a worldly, ambitious mother, and encouraged in all its follies by too great indulgence on the part of Mr. Rosebury. What the world calls pleasure was her idol, and as she never pursued any object by halves, she sacrificed every duty to this infatuation. As to the Misses Morley, they were like most other young ladies who are brought up in worldly families. And whereas George was very like his father, who was a remarkably well-looking man, Julia was the very image of her mother, and was hence an especial favourite of all her relations by the mother's side.

There was no want of money in the family on either side; indeed, Mr. Morley was supposed to be rich, and the old lady had a large jointure; in consequence of which, when they came to Nice, they provided themselves with a handsome house, hiring it ready furnished from a family who resided in the town; for of late years, that is, since the French Revolution, the country-houses

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of the gentlemen and nobility of Nice are almost entirely abandoned.

The house is still standing, and has a less modern appearance than most of the edifices in the environs of the town; it is a square building, having turrets at each end, and each turret being surmounted by a vane or weather-cock. The building is simple, having no fresco paintings, so generally seen on the walls of gentlemen's houses in this part of the world; it stands on a ridge of Mont Moran, but clear of the principal eminence, and just in a parallel with that line of the hill which is covered with olive woods, so that it has a protected appearance, the whole domain being encircled with olive groves. All the grounds above and below this house are laid out in terraces, chiefly covered with vines, but having some cypress and many orange-trees mingled with the vines, and on the southern front there is a splendid palm-tree, such as is not very common in this part of the world. Being thus situated, the prospects from this house are uncommonly fine. To the north, or rather to the north-east, is the principal summit of Mont Moran, crowned by the castle of Mont Alban. On the south, the descent towards the sea is so precipitous and so richly wooded, so rough with rock, so bold and broken, that the house is only approachable in that direction by steep and craggy pathways, such as persons accustomed to mountainous regions only could overcome; and beyond this rocky and woody region, some thousand feet below, is the harbour of Nice, with all its shipping, and beyond, the whole extent of coast towards the west, as far as Antibes, and even as far as the islands of St. Marguerite and St. Honoré, near where the Alps of l'Estrelles obtrude themselves into the ocean. On the west the town of Nice, with its castellated rock, is spread before the eye, and beyond it those various heights which, forming a termination of one of the branches of the Maritime Alps, approach so near the sea as to leave only a very small line of plain, over which passes the road from France. And on the north-west, over an immense ravine, were visible the bed of the Paglion, the hill and convents of Cimïes, and the monastery and church of St. Pons, with other hills rising above, and terminated by the often snow-crowned mountains of the Col de Tende.

The approach to this house is through a narrow way which passes from the Piazza Victoria up to the castle

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of Mont Alban and Villa Franca, and under a gateway which leads into a second lane, only wide enough to admit a carriage, and practicable for wheels only as far as the gates of the domain. This gate also has an antique appearance, and opens directly into a long paved vine-walk, flanked with pillars of stone placed on each side, the vines forming a canopy of no inferior beauty over the head of the passenger, and being mingled with roses and sweet-thorn, form a vista of which it is difficult for the inhabitants of our cold northern region to conceive an idea.

Such was the place chosen for the residence of this family; and as it was beautiful without, so within it was arranged with every possible attention to convenience, and with no slight view to splendour; and the family were scarcely settled when Mrs. Rosebury became the mother of a second girl.

All the relations had wished for a boy, and the mother had been particularly solicitous on this point, because her brother had said several times, "If my sister's little one proves to be a boy, I shall adopt him; he shall be called Morley, and I will make him my heir. I am a determined old bachelor—I will not be troubled with a wife, and therefore I shall claim this child as my own." Hence, when the mother was told that the little one was a girl, she conceived a dislike to it, although she endeavoured to conceal this feeling from its father; she therefore pretended incapacity to nurse it, and it was settled that it should be reared as well as might be without that nourishment so earnestly desired by babes: a servant was accordingly hired who was particularly skilful in the management of infants; and because this woman professed that she could not undertake the charge if interfered with, she was established immediately with her little nursling in a range of apartments on the south side of the house; the cook and other servants being directed to supply her with every thing she required. Nor did Teresa, for such was her name, disappoint the expectations of those who had hired her, for the little one throve under her hand, filled out, grew fair, and round, and dimpled, smiled and chuckled when chirped to by her nurse, and within a very few months might have served for the model of a little cherub. But when Mrs. Rosebury was able to think of these things, she assembled a family-council respecting the name which

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was to be given to the child. "She shall not be called Morley," said the uncle, "since she is a girl, lest the name should slide into that most detestable of all derivatives, viz. the short name for Mary."

"Don't speak of it," said the grandmother, for Mrs. Rosebury was too much vexed to reply; and the old lady then suggested another and another name, to all and each of which there was some objection raised.

It was then made a question whether the child could not have a name which might mark her birth at Nice, for Mrs. Rosebury liked any thing which was not quite common, or, to use her own words, she was fond of something *recherché*, particularly in names; and after some consideration it was settled that the little girl should be called Victoria, since her native place bore the name of Nice, which signifies, in Greek, victory. This name, therefore, was bestowed upon the child at her baptism by an English clergyman, who passed through Nice on his way to Genoa about this time.

But when the bustle of the christening was over, and the infant had received her fine-sounding appellative, she was thought little more of than before; and because she enjoyed a course of uninterrupted health, and did every possible credit by her appearance to the management of Teresa, Mrs. Rosebury even took merit to herself for the consequences of her own indifference, and while directing Teresa to present the sparkling infant to her lady visiters, she would often say, "I consider it quite a duty not to interfere with that good creature Teresa in the management of the dear little thing." The ladies did not fail to hold up the mother in this laudable resolution, not considering that while she was persevering in her determination not to interfere with the good creature Teresa (who certainly did manage the infant with great skill), her own heart was becoming more and more hardened against her child, or, to use a milder term, those cold affections which might have been warmed by the endearments of her little one, had she been more with it, were suffered to languish, and at length, it is to be apprehended, nearly to die away.

But to leave this lady, whom we are ashamed to call an Englishwoman, we will turn to a person of a very different character, viz. Victoria's nurse. Teresa de Val was a native of Rome, where her father had been an inferior servant in the family of a cardinal; she was

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about forty years of age when she undertook the charge of Mrs. Rosebury's infant, having been highly recommended by a noble family from Rome then in Nice; her services were not however to be obtained under a high salary. Would you wish for a description of her person? It had been very handsome—she was a little woman, but looked much older than women of forty do in our milder climate; her complexion was of a deep bronze, her hair black, her eyes dark and sparkling, her teeth looked white from the contrast with her complexion, and her air was much superior to that of women in her rank in our own country; her dress was the costume of Rome, with the exception of that peculiar headdress which it would be most difficult to describe: it consisted of a black velvet bodice with long sleeves, a full petticoat of flowered chintz, a silk apron with large pockets, and a huge golden cross suspended by a black riband from her neck; her hair was drawn from her forehead, and fastened with a knot behind; she wore huge drops in her ears, a small cap of black velvet with tassels on her head, and a silk handkerchief on her neck: she spoke Italian well, and French with the Italian accent; and she could make herself well understood in the patois of Nice. Her manner, when she chose, was flattering and caressing; but the least want of deference even in her masters would throw her into reserve, and she would bear an offence of this kind in mind many days. She had reared several children from the birth, all children of superior families, and all her nurslings loved her exceedingly—even when they had tender mothers to share that love—which was not the case with little Victoria. If therefore Teresa was all in all to this child, was it more than might have been expected? yet I ought not to omit to say, that if the mother was altogether heartless as regarded Victoria, it was not so with the father, though he had no idea of paying her those attentions which are due from a parent to a child; it was enough for him to see her thriving under the care of Teresa, and he was persuaded that if she looked well, and if he heard her often crow and laugh when Teresa played with her, and if she trembled with impatience, as she always did, whenever any one held her at a distance from her attendant, and was ready to spring out of the arms that held her into those which were ever ready to receive her, he could not doubt that she was better

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with her affectionate nurse than with her cold and heartless mother. Notwithstanding which, he was much gratified when she was about the age of six months to observe that she was generally willing to leave even Teresa to come to him; and as he afterward said, he never lost the feeling of pleasure he experienced when first she called after him from the terrace on which her nurse was holding her, extending her little arms to him, and crying bitterly when he disappeared in order to come up the stairs to the place where she was; from that time, as he afterward said, his heart was drawn more closely to this his youngest child, and it was always with mutual satisfaction that the father and daughter met henceforward, though, as I before said, he still neglected to bestow upon his little darling those cares which are due from a parent to his offspring.

I have said that the family had resolved to take an excursion during the warm season every year, and to make their house at Nice only their residence for part of the year. Money was no object to them, they therefore retained their house, and always kept a few servants in it. Victoria and Teresa generally accompanied them in their summer excursion. On one or two occasions they were however left at Nice, and it was probably on the first occasion of this kind that the idea suggested itself to Teresa that she would endeavour to make her little nursling a Roman Catholic, an idea which could not have been entertained with much prospect of success, had she not perceived how entirely the child was left to her management; for till Victoria was six years of age, it was not thought necessary to teach her even to read—her mother being always in the habit of saying, whenever the education of the child was alluded to, "She is not losing time, for she is learning three languages; she already speaks Italian to perfection, and with such volubility that I am not able to follow her—she is almost as ready with French, and although she is not so prompt with English, yet she knows what we say even when we do not wish she should." But this was only what we may call a salvo to the conscience of the mother, who loved what she called pleasure more than her own fair infant. People disagree very much in their notions of what is pleasant, that which is sweet and delightful to the children of God being altogether the contrary to those who love the world; and perhaps

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there are now few families so large as that of which we are speaking, of which every member is so entirely devoted to the world as this was. Some of the individuals of the family might perhaps have been naturally more amiable than others, but one and all loved and followed that alone which belonged to this present life. The ladies were never easy but when in company or preparing for company. Julia was to be educated to shine in company; and Mr. Morley was always in society, though his set was not the same as that of his mother and sisters. Mr. Rosebury was without doubt the most amiable of the family, but he had the weakness to allow himself to be entirely led by his wife. Julia had been taught to be cold and insolent to him, but George was very fond of his papa, and would often invite him to walk and talk with him, asking him questions which, had they been followed up, might have led to something more than mere vanity; for this little boy thought a great deal, and was a great examiner into truth, wanting to know the difference between the Roman Catholic religion and that called Protestant, and inquiring closely into the authority which people had for worshipping the saints, whose images he saw in every direction.

The only day in the week on which this family were obliged to be quiet was Sunday. I do not know whether there was a place in Nice at that time for the English to meet for divine service, but by all accounts, the family of which we are now speaking did not find out the place if there were such a one; and, as old Mrs. Morley used to say, "Sunday was always the longest day in all the week," for, as she would express herself, "one cannot be reading good books all day, and if one takes a drive it will only last a few hours, and it is hardly thought creditable for the English to go to the Sunday balls of the nobility of Nice, so one hardly knows what to do with one's self;" and then the old lady would yawn and stretch, and commonly finish off the day with some sort of game, either of backgammon, or chess, or bagatelle, for she had half an idea that it would not be quite right to let people see her play at cards on a Sunday, and thus even the form of religion had quite passed away from this family; insomuch that the Roman Catholic servants, and among the rest Teresa, used to say of their masters and mistresses that they were infidels; which horrible epithet, to the discredit of the carelessness of

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English travellers, is now too often bestowed upon Protestants on the Continent.

Such then was the family in which Victoria was reared; her relations being wholly without even the forms of religion, and her nurse being (as will be seen in the sequel) one who firmly believed that there was no salvation beyond the pale of the papal church.

It can hardly, I trust, be necessary to point out to my reader that Rome is now the capital city of the pope's dominions, as it once was of all the civilized earth,—the chief seat of the great Roman Catholic anti-christian heresy. The head of this church is the pope, who pretends to derive his authority from St. Peter, alleging as the ground of his authority two verses in the gospels which are not thoroughly understood, but which at any rate have nothing to do with St. Peter, who was never bishop of Rome, as may be proved from history.

However, it seems that the bishops of Rome (who are called pope, or papa, or father) have had influence enough for ages past to persuade the people that they are successors of St. Peter, and that they have received the power from him of opening and shutting the gates of heaven to every soul which may desire admittance; and there was a time when almost every nation in Europe believed that the Bishop of Rome was infallible as head of the church, and that he had authority not only in his own person to exclude those who did not submit themselves to him for the benefits of Christ's death, but that he had power also to extend this privilege to all the bishops and inferior ministers of the church; hence the anathema maranetha of the pope and of the church was dreaded more than death by all orders of people, and no boundary was set to the encroachments and tyranny of the priests; and because they denied the privilege of reading the Scriptures to the people, they were enabled to make them believe the most monstrous lies, and to establish various forms of worship which are forbidden in Scripture,—such as that of the adoration of saints and images and relics, with penances, and fastings, and holy days, and auricular confession; all of which were instituted for the increase of the authority and influence of the priests, and for the amassing of gold and treasure.

But within the last two or three hundred years, the credit of the Roman church has been passing away; in

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France it is now no longer in authority, and in England it has almost entirely yielded, it is hoped, to a purer form of worship; but in Italy, and Spain, and Portugal it is still in force, and in the King of Sardinia's dominions, of which Nice forms a part, it is dangerous for a subject to have a Bible in his possession.

But Teresa was, as we have before said, devoted entirely to popery: insomuch that she believed that no one could be saved who did not receive all that was taught by the Roman church; and such being her belief, can we wonder if, from the moment she had ascertained that there was no guard kept upon Victoria, she should have conceived the idea of making her a papist as soon as ever she could be made to understand any thing of the forms of popery? In this instance Teresa acted according to principle, and was not so much to be blamed in what she did as Victoria's parents, who, instead of being anxious, like herself, to teach the child some religion, though a false one, never considered whether she had or had not a soul to be saved.

So years passed on; Julia grew tall and well-looking, and became by degrees the companion of her gay young aunts, scarcely ever bestowing a thought on her little sister; and George was sent back to England to be placed in a public seminary. In the mean time Victoria grew, and passed from that state of infancy in which Teresa was a very kind and proper attendant, to be a little girl running about, and prattling to every one who would listen to her, and picking up good and evil just as they came to hand. Teresa had taken great care of her health, and kept her from being tanned by the sun and wind; hence she was blooming and fair, and had a bright sparkling countenance—loving those persons who were kind to her, without measure, and being cold and shy to those whom she did not love.

But there was one thing which soon might have been seen in her, if any one had taken the trouble to examine her character, and this was, that she could tell that which was not true with an untroubled countenance, and stand to it also, and make out stories of things that happened quite different to what was the fact. She never indeed told these stories to Teresa, because she knew that she could not deceive her, and therefore if her relations had taken the same pains as her nurse had done to win her confidence and affection, she might easily

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have been prevented from falling into this sin. But though Teresa would never allow her to tell an untruth to herself, yet she took pains to teach her to deceive her parents. It was very common for her nurse to say to her, "Take care that you do not tell your mamma where you have been to-day, or whom you have seen, or who gave you those flowers; for if you tell, I will take you out no more; and you shall see nobody; and you shall have no flowers:" and thus the little girl, before she was four years old, had become so cunning, that if anybody asked her a question she either gave a false answer or none at all; and this mode of answering often gave her a singular appearance, so that her friends at times feared that she wanted sense. What Teresa's motives were for initiating her in deceit cannot be doubted: a true papist never considers the means when the end is before him, and that end what he thinks desirable; and she found her pupil a tractable one—for deceit, alas! is not so uncongenial to the human mind as many persons are apt to think.

When this system of lying was sufficiently matured, the nurse ventured upon a further step, for which one of the summer excursions of the family, the child and the nurse being left at Nice, gave ample opportunity. Victoria was then four years old, and when in after-life she was enabled to recollect the occurrences of that period, she fixed many scenes upon that time which she thought could not have happened in any other. She remembered about this time being carried by Teresa along that winding path which leads from the end of a narrow street, opening into the Piazza Victoria, up the hill towards Mont Alban. Her father's domain communicated with this road, by a shorter path which puts itself into it, through a high stone door-way, and several steps.

This path is so unlike any thing we see in our own fair island, that I feel I ought to endeavour to describe it. It is a stony way, winding in a zigzag form, up one of those hills by which Nice is surrounded, and it is shaded on both sides with olive-trees, many of which are rooted in the rock; and in the wall, which is very high on the side where the hill rises, and low on the other, are one or two door-ways, arched over, which lead into gardens, in which are small houses, such as are

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often seen in Italian landscapes; and here also is a niche in the wall, where is the figure of a Virgin and Child; but I cannot say how long this figure may have been there, since it is not mentioned in my history.

Teresa had made acquaintance with the people who lived in these small houses, and had watched her opportunities, when she took the child out in the cool of the morning, to make her also acquainted with them. These visits, as far as I can understand, had been hitherto made by stealth; but it appears that these intimacies were greatly improved at this particular period of the absence of the family; at which time Victoria was so familiarized with the habits of the peasantry and their ways of acting and thinking, that she mingled in their occupations, and would stand under the olive-tree when the mother had climbed into the branches, and pick up the olives as they were dropped into a cloth spread upon the ground; and she delighted to show how she could balance a basket on her head, and walk as steadily under it as her little friends Giuseppa and Cecilia. She had also learned to think as well as to act with them—to attribute any misfortune to the displeasure of the saints; and if she but stumbled and scratched her arm, to call upon La Sainte Vierge, or Santa Rosalia, to assist her.

But among the recollections of this period there was one scene especially impressed on her mind; but she could not tell whether what had happened there had recurred more than once, or whether it was a solitary fact. She remembered being on the hill above the houses into which her nurse had so often introduced her, and there was a road passing away over these heights; it was the ancient road to Genoa over the Corniche, and the hill Mont Moran, crowned by the fortress of Mont Alban, was before her. Shepherds were feeding their flocks on the thymy acclivities of that hill, and Nice and the sea were far below her on the left, and on the right was a new-looking building; it was shaded with trees, and had a portico before it; and while she was standing there, an old gentleman came to her; he had a long black dress and a scarf over his shoulders, and a three-cornered hat on his head, and his hair was quite white; and he came smiling to her, and said, "My child, receive my blessing;" and taking her by the hand, led her towards that building spoken of before; in the front of it was a portico, and

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over the portico the figure of a man in coloured painting, and the man stood as it were above a sea of fire, and in that sea were many miserable similitudes of men, women, and children, supposed to be in torment; and the old gentleman pointed out these figures to her, and told her that they were the representation of the souls of people who did not believe and obey the church. She remembered being frightened at these figures, and asking whether she should ever be put into that fire and look like those people; and then she recollected that the old gentleman lifted her up in his arms and held her to a small grated window in the wall, bidding her to look in; and she did look in, and saw a lady standing on a sort of pedestal; and this lady was very richly arrayed; she wore a robe of rose-coloured satin, wrought with flowers of gold and silver, and in her arms was a pretty baby, and the baby was dressed as richly as its mother; and at the feet of the lady was a sort of table covered with a purple cloth fringed with gold; and there were books on the table, embossed with stars, and many flowers in vases, and a golden crucifix; and when she had looked a while at all these beautiful things, she was made to understand what they were intended to signify. She was told that the lady was the mother of God and the queen of heaven, and that she had power to save her from the fire in which the souls were; and she was also told that the baby was the son of the lady; therefore she settled it in her own young mind that the baby was God, and from that time, whatever her age might have been when this scene took place, she was accustomed to repeat her prayers to this beautiful lady, and to place her trust in her as in one who could save her in all dangers and difficulties, and especially from that terrible fire which had made so deep an impression on her young imagination. The prayer which she was taught to use commenced with these words:—"Ave Maria, gratia Dei," &c., which is the address of the angel to Mary, as given us by St. Luke. But, as I before said, Victoria never could tell how often this scene as described above, or one resembling it, had taken place, nor what age she might have been when it did take place, or when the old gentleman spoken of above ceased to meet with her in the olive woods, or who he was, or what became of him. But certain it is, that the impressions made by these and similar occurrences

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and conversations were so strong, that before she had attained the age of ten, she was as firm and decided in the belief of the doctrines of popery as its strongest friends could have wished. And, as I have before said, she had all the cunning which attaches itself to that form of doctrine, the very foundation of which resides in cunningly devised fables, and the very strength of which consists in flying from the light of divine truth.

She therefore hid her opinions most carefully from her parents, and knowing that she had one thing of great consequence to conceal, she fancied that she must hide many things which were of no consequence; and accordingly, as I before said, had learned to deceive, and to tell untruths with an undisturbed countenance and without a blush; but perhaps, as you live in that country where, through the Divine blessing, we are not required to believe any thing which is not found in the Holy Scriptures, you may not exactly know what the Roman Catholic Church requires of its people, and therefore it may be agreeable to you to be told what are its doctrines, as drawn up in the bull of Pope Pius the Fourth.

Pope Pius says that he will never receive or interpret the Holy Scriptures otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the fathers; but as, in the first instance, he does not tell us who these fathers were, or even if we could in any way conjecture who they might possibly be, as they never unanimously agreed to interpret the Scriptures in any particular way, as far as we know from any book or books which they have left, or which the Roman Catholics pretend to show, this declaration only amounts to this—that all wisdom and all knowledge belonged to these fathers.

Pope Pius also enumerates the sacraments instituted by Christ himself, adding to baptism and the supper of the Lord, holy orders, extreme unction, marriage, confirmation, and penance; though in his catechism he can give no account of when Christ instituted these, nor is he ashamed to confess his ignorance. He acknowledges the Council of Trent, relating to original sin and justification. Although it contains the most obnoxious statements of these doctrines, together with sundry contradictions, he acknowledges that it is lawful to bow down before an image; he calls the Virgin Mary the mother of God, thereby denying that our Lord existed before he became incarnate in the womb of the blessed

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Virgin; he acknowledges that the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, which are offered up by the priest and called the sacrifice of the mass, are the true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead; he believes that the transubstantiation, or transformation of the elements, that is, the bread and wine, into the real body and blood of Christ, is performed by the will of the priest, or by the intention; for if the priest should openly make a show of sanctifying the elements, and yet does not intend it, the transubstantiation does not take place; from which it does actually follow, according to him, that the priest may at any time reduce his people to worship a piece of dough, at the very moment in which they believe themselves to be worshipping the body of Christ.

It should also be remarked in this place, that the Roman Catholics believe that if, either by accident or design, the bread which is used in the Lord's Supper is mixed with any inferior flour, transubstantiation does not take place; if the wine is mixed with water, the same result is said to ensue; and the failure also takes place if the priest is an infidel, the priest being supposed to be the channel of all blessings to the people.

These are some of the leading heresies of the Roman Catholic Church; but who shall enumerate all its deceptions, its various contradictory forms and rites, and multiplied ceremonies, its endless absurdities, and the terrors with which it keeps souls under its dominion? —purgatory, and penance, and auricular confession, and visions, and miracles of healing, which last, they say, are impeded, and rendered null, by the want of faith in the person desiring to be healed (a dogma which, by-the-by, may be very convenient on occasion of the failure of an attempt at a miracle of this sort). But mighty and complicated as is this vast machinery of popery, Victoria was made to receive as much of it as her infant mind could be thought capable of, her indefatigable attendant losing no opportunity of impressing the principles she sought to inculcate; and hence the influence of some of these errors was extremely strong, even during the tenderest years of her childhood. She was perfectly persuaded that all her relations were under the Divine condemnation as heretics; and she cared so little for them, that she had not a wish for the conversion of any one of them, with the exception of

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her papa; he had indeed neglected her, but still he was kind; he had always a pleasant smile for her whenever they met, and his hand was always stretched out whenever she came into the saloon, to draw her towards him.

She therefore loved her papa, and used often to say, "O how I wish papa were not a heretic!" But Teresa was not the only teacher of Victoria; there was in the house a cook, named Bianca, very skilful in her line, and one who knew well how to please her masters; she was a woman of a certain age, hard-featured, and loud in voice—though she could lower her tones when it suited her purpose; she was honest too in those things immediately under her command, and hence had always been well thought of by her employers. She had, moreover, much of that sort of religion which consists in attention to forms. She prided herself on eating fish on fast days, and going out of the house every evening of a fête, though few people knew whither. She heard the mass once every week, and confessed and communed at stated times every year; with all this she had the temper of a dragon, and quarrelled every day with all the servants in the house, with the exception of Teresa, of whose company she was so fond that she seldom failed to pay her a visit in her own apartments at one time or other of the day; and then it was that these two old women, being got together, detailed in the ears of Victoria many strange legends of the saints and martyrs, all of which tended to prove the blessedness of those who are the faithful sons and daughters of mother church, and the utter hopelessness of the case of those who reject her divine authority, or who do not pay due honour to her institutions. Victoria used to listen to these tales till her blood was frozen with terror; and it was seldom on these occasions that she did not express her firm determination, as soon as she was of age, to adopt the Roman Catholic form of worship at the risk even of the lasting displeasure of all her friends.

This declaration was always received with warm expressions of admiration on the part of Bianca, and with the most affectionate caresses from Teresa. Thus, as I have described, passed the early life of Victoria. When she was six years of age her parents procured various masters for her, and it was at this time that Teresa had the address to bring about the introduction of a young priest as a tutor to Victoria, to instruct her

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in reading and writing. This young man was a native of Genoa, a man of elegant address and pleasing appearance. Mrs. Rosebury was very well satisfied with him, and often invited him to join her evening parties. His name was Carlotti. Victoria had other masters besides Signor Carlotti; she was accustomed to attend them in a room off the saloon. Teresa always sat with her on these occasions, and her mother came in sometimes to inquire how she got on.

Thus the net was gathered closer and closer round the little girl, while her careless friends never once suspected that there could be any danger in leaving her thus entirely with the professors of a false religion, and the members of an apostate church. Not that Signor Carlotti began openly with her on the subject of the Roman Catholic doctrines, but he contrived to insinuate much, and by degrees to draw her out to confess her own tendency towards them in such a way that he made it appear that she had herself invited him to the discussion; nay, he went farther than this, when she became anxious to engage him in conversation respecting religion, he pretended scruples, and made it a favour to her to open his mind, so that she felt herself bound in honour not to betray him. And as she was a child of an uncommonly strong mind, she probably would have endured any punishment rather than mention his name in connection with religion.

In the mean time, she became more and more deeply involved with these mysteries. She borrowed several books on the subject of the Roman Catholic faith, and Teresa took care to put in her way such histories as she could understand, in which the enemies of popery were represented in the most terrible colours, and its friends made to appear as the beloved of God.

These books were replete with frightful and ridiculous tales respecting the evil one, for it has been one of the chief arts of Satan to cause himself to be represented in the most burlesque point of view by the false church, in order that he may not be known in his true character, wherein he often appears as an angel of light, and acts, or rather influences his people to act, with much attention to worldly wisdom, and what is called expediency.

Thus, as I have described, passed the time of Victoria from her sixth to her eleventh year, at which period a

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summons of a nature totally unexpected came from Teresa's friends in Rome, which made it absolutely necessary for her to leave Nice immediately. This was an unlooked-for blow, and confounded at once all her plans. Nevertheless she still hoped much from Signor Carlotti, who was in attendance on Victoria as a tutor; nor was she without hope that Bianca would be faithful in the cause she had at heart: accordingly she took occasion to recommend them both to her beloved child as persons high in the favour of the church, and equally excellent in their way.

But it was necessary for her to leave Nice within twenty-four hours, and the parting was an exceedingly painful one: as to the child, she was in agonies when the moment of separation came, nor was Teresa less affected than was Victoria; she wept and prayed, and charged her child to be constant in the true faith, and at a proper age to make an open declaration of it, recommending her, especially, to the protection of the Holy Virgin and Sainte Rosalie—the latter of whom, it is said, has transferred her bones from Sicily to Nice. The last gift of Teresa to Victoria was an Agnus Dei of alabaster, wrought at Florence; and thus they parted, while the afflicted child stood where she had been left, in the window of a turret, motionless as the marble figure which she held in her hand, watching Teresa as she crossed the garden, and passed away towards the bay where she was to embark. It might be ten in the morning when Teresa took her departure, and Victoria stood where her nurse had left her till she saw a ship in full sail pass the promontory of Mont Moran and disappear from her view. She had no question but this was the vessel which was bearing away Teresa, and when she could see it no more, she threw herself on her knees, with her face upon the bed, and wept till it seemed that the very sources of her tears were exhausted.

What had the parents of this child to answer for, who, by their unpardonable neglect, had permitted affections such as these to be diverted into a channel so dangerous and so degrading! But to proceed: the sorrowful little girl, having wept till she could weep no longer, at length fell asleep, kneeling as she was against the bed, and thus the time passed till the dinner hour, which was always very early, as is usual at Nice, had arrived, and the

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family being assembled, it was observed that Victoria was absent.

"Ah!" said Mrs. Rosebury, "that reminds me that Teresa is gone to-day."

"Victoria's beloved Teresa," remarked Julia; "and I have no doubt that my sister is in the lamentables; shall we leave her to mourn, or shall we call her down?"

"Call her down by all means," said the father, "and let us try to comfort her. And now, Julia," he added, "now is your time to take her more into your own society—I should like to see her more with you than I have hitherto done."

"Indeed, papa," replied Julia, "I do not see how that is to be; she is such a child, and I am come out, you know—surely you would not have me go into the nursery again after I have been introduced."

"It may be that your father thinks it would still be the best place for you, Miss Julia," remarked Mr. Morley; "perhaps you may have been taken out of the nursery too soon, and your sister may have been left in it too long; however," he added, "let the child be called, and let us see how she bears up against her loss—a loss, however, which I am half inclined to think may turn out to be a gain."

"How so, son?" asked Mrs. Morley; "I am sure that Teresa has been a faithful creature, and has saved my daughter a vast deal of trouble by the care she has bestowed on the child."

"I am always jealous of those faithful creatures who save mothers so much trouble," replied Mr. Morley; "what say you, brother?" Mr. Rosebury looked serious, but made no answer, and Victoria was sent for: and although she came down looking extremely pale, and having her eyes swelled up, nobody took any notice of her appearance, but her papa looked very kindly at her, and once or twice extended his hand to her across the table, finding something pleasant and encouraging to say each time.

But after the meal, Victoria contrived to slip out of the room, and had any one taken the trouble to follow her, they would have found her in the turret looking towards the sea; her relations were engaged abroad as usual; she was called down about six o'clock to take coffee with them, and when they went out, her mother

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directed her maid to put her to bed, and thus finished that day so sad to Victoria.

But although Mr. Rosebury had for several years past fallen into that idle habit, so hurtful to the soul, of wasting his hours in paying and receiving visits, and in lounging about the news-rooms where he saw the last papers from England and Paris, yet he had always felt uneasy and dissatisfied with this life, and often used to comfort himself by thinking that he would change his plans, and set himself to improve his time and prepare for death; and of late, that is, for the last few months, he had become more and more uneasy, and more and more discontented with the life he was leading; and these feelings were so strong that they affected his health, he lost his appetite, grew nervous, every occupation became distasteful, and his sleep became disturbed. And this night in particular he was more than usually uncomfortable; and as he lay awake in his bed, his brother's remarks respecting Victoria came into his mind, and these words particularly rung in his ears, "Perhaps Victoria has been kept too long in the nursery;" too long, thought Mr. Rosebury, too long—and I fear that many bad habits and plans have been carried on too long in the family. My wife was young when I married her, and I might have then led her easily into better habits. I had then many years before me, which I might have spent to advantage in improving myself and my children—I might have made Julia very different to what she now is—I might have led my wife to honour and respect me, which I fear she cannot now do—I might have taught my little boy many things which would be useful to him—now—O that word too long—I have indeed been foolish too long; but I will change my life—I will begin to-morrow—to-morrow I will do right.

Poor Mr. Rosebury! he was not yet, I fear, in the right way; he had not yet found out, that no man can do well in his own strength; but he had lived so long without thinking of God, that even when he was planning to do better, it never occurred to him that his heavenly Father could have any thing to do with his plans—and yet at this very time the Almighty was drawing him towards himself, and it was (as we have no hesitation in saying) the Lord the Spirit who had stirred up in his heart these first feelings of self-dissatis-

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faction. We are taught by Scripture that the natural man is dead in sin, and, as one dead, incapable of taking one step in the right way; yet we all feel that we might pray in affliction, and the word of God assures us that if we pray for help it shall be given us. These are difficult subjects, and above human reason; it is enough for us to know that he that cometh to the Saviour shall in nowise be cast out.

But when Mr. Rosebury came to breakfast the next morning, he found a note which made it necessary for him to go out as soon as he had taken his coffee. He was out till dinner-time, but after dinner, when the servants had left the room, an occasion for opening the subject next his heart presented itself; and thus, as is often the case, the poor man, who was yet weak as an infant in the way which he ought to go, was helped forward by a kind of providence, while as yet he hardly discerned a step before him. The servants had scarcely removed the cloth and set the fruit on the table, when a packet, which had been brought by a private hand from England, was delivered to him from his son George.

"From our boy, my dear," he said; "from your brother, my Victoria;" and opening the packet in haste, he found several letters: not one dear relation was forgotten, but among the many epistles contained in the packet was a very long one for himself. George, who had made choice some years since of the church for his profession, had passed through the university of Oxford with some credit, and was, at the time he wrote, with a relation in England, waiting for permission to avail himself of the interval, before he was to enter holy orders, to visit his family at Nice. This letter to his father was in the first instance to ask this favour, and in the second to open a subject which it seems occupied his whole heart.

It would fill too large a space of my little volume to copy this letter, but my reader shall know the contents. It seems that during his last term at the university, he had fallen into the society of a young man, who had been made the blessed means of opening his eyes to the truths of the Christian religion, not partially and by halves, but wholly and entirely. This friend had not only been blessed in administering to him the milk of the gospel, but also in supplying him with the strong meat; he had not only taught him the first simple prin-

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ciples, but he had made him to understand the deeper doctrines.

You will perhaps be inclined to ask me what these simple principles and what these deeper doctrines are. I answer, that the simple principles are the turning away from our own works, which are as dead as regards our salvation; faith towards God, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of him that diligently seeketh him; the doctrine of regeneration, or renewal of the heart by the Holy Spirit, of which baptism is the visible sign; of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment—these are the first principles of the Christian faith: whereas the deeper mysteries are, the eternal purposes of the Father, by which the Son was given for the salvation of the elect, with the various works of the Son and Holy Spirit, by which the salvation of the elect is accomplished.

And as I before said, George Rosebury had been enabled to see these doctrines, and to receive them as articles of faith, and to believe that inasmuch as the Father had revealed the Son to him as the Saviour, his salvation was already secure, inasmuch as the Lord has said, "No man cometh unto me unless the Father draw him;" and in this assurance he was waiting the fulfilment of the promise of sanctification from God the Holy Spirit—a promise which already had begun to be fulfilled, inasmuch as the young man had already lost his relish for worldly pleasures, and found his mind strongly exercised with anxiety respecting the spiritual welfare of his relations, and especially of his father, of whom he retained the most pleasing and endearing recollections. As, however, he hoped to see that father very soon, he did not open out his whole heart to him by letter, fearing that the comments of his other relations might counteract his purposes, but satisfied himself by pressing earnestly the duty of attending to the care of his soul, and to that of the souls of his daughters, and, as it were, stating to him the first simple obligations of one who desired to become a Christian.

As the father read and re-read this letter, he became so absorbed, and the expression of his countenance underwent so many changes, that Mrs. Rosebury at length said in some alarm, "Is any thing the matter—have you any unpleasant communication there?"

"None—none whatever," replied Mr. Rosebury.

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"Why, then, do you look so uneasy? I am sure something is wrong," added the mother.

"Nothing whatever, I assure you," returned Mr. Rosebury; "and to satisfy you, I will read the letter aloud."

He did so, and was not interrupted through the whole of the lecture, but when he had closed the letter, many comments were made.

"Indeed," said the grandmother, "Master George has not been at college for nothing, it seems. What a tone is this to use to a parent! Really, son, if you do allow this young man his wishes, you must insist upon it that there shall be no dictation to his elders. What a heap of stuff is here about first principles—and duties—and neglect of the soul! I have no notion of that sort of religion which teaches young people to despise their elders."

"But, dear madam," said Mr. Rosebury, "perhaps there may be some truth—" and he was proceeding, when she raised her voice and carried on the discourse in her own way.

"Truth!" she said, "truth, indeed! as if we, at our time of life, did not understand truth as well as a young man of that sort What would he have? I ask; what would he have? Would he have us turn monks and nuns, or do penance with bare feet before the altar? I am sure that for my part I have always led a very correct and virtuous life—I owe no person any thing—I have brought up my family well—I read Blair's Sermons through, as my daughters know, every year—and the poor beggars in the streets know me so well, that when I pass they call me the good English lady—you know they do, son Morley."

"I do, madam," replied Mr. Morley; "but do not exactly see what this has to do with George's letter."

"Because you will not see," said Mrs. Rosebury. "My mother only brings these things forward in order that we may understand what improvements and reformations Mr. George would wish to effect. But setting these things aside, I certainly do think, that when young people take upon themselves to criticise the conduct of their elders, it is rather a sign of an impertinent, pragmatical spirit, than of religion. And I do hope, Mr. Rosebury, that you will write to George and tell him that we shall all be glad to see him, but that we beg he

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will have the goodness to permit his parents to think and act as they judge best."

"My dear," replied Mr. Rosebury, "if you will not be offended—"

"Offended!" said the lady, cutting him short, "it is quite unimportant to me—"

"Unimportant!" said Mr. Morley, taking her up as she had before done her husband, "quite unimportant to a wife what her husband thinks!—*O tempora! O mores!*"

"Will you give me leave to finish my speech?" said the lady, angrily; "I was going to say, that it is quite unimportant to me what George may choose to say or to think, any further than that I do not like to see such arrogance in young people."

"But, my dear," said Mr. Rosebury, "I think that we ought at least to weigh what our son says. His letter is kind and respectful, and I am more than half convinced that he is right; I have of late felt some apprehension lest the manner of life we are leading is not exactly what it should be. Life is short at best, and its termination in a few years is certain; death produces an awful change—it introduces us to a new state of being: ought all our thoughts to be upon the things of time, and is eternity to occupy none of our cares? I feel myself already a different man in point of health and strength to what I was some months past; I am heartily tired of our mode of life—can we not be happy at home?—for instance, this evening, could you not contrive to stay within, and let us go early to rest? we might then talk over George's letter—read it again, and let him speak for himself."

"If you are unwell, that is another thing," said Mrs. Rosebury; "of course you ought not to go out, and the physician should be sent for; but as to our staying at home with you, I hope you will not require it—this is the night of Madame Orengo's concert; you know that Julia has been preparing for it with her masters for several days, and she is expected to take a very distinguished part. I appeal to my mother to confirm what I have said, and to assure you that it is quite impossible for me to stay at home to-night."

Mrs. Morley, her two daughters, and Julia, all at once chimed in to prove to poor Mr. Rosebury that this night, of all nights in the year, was precisely the night in

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which they must all go out; and though not convinced, yet he was silenced, and accordingly, when the dessert was finished, he retired to his study and lounged away the rest of the evening in a manner of which I can give no account, retiring early to a bed in an alcove within his study, and not seeing his wife again till the noon of the next day, for the ladies were up nearly all night, and therefore did not meet in the usual sitting room at breakfast. But at dinner again, Mr. Rosebury still complaining of his health, ventured to say, "I wish, my dear, we had not these constant engagements; I should be very glad if you could be at home to-night."

"Well, then, you will have your wish, papa," remarked Julia, "we shall be at home this evening."

"Yes," said Mr. Morley, "Mrs. Rosebury is to be at home to-day."

"At home!" remarked Mr. Rosebury, "are you going to have a party?"

"Not above thirty persons, papa," returned Julia; "and you know that is a small party."

"Well," said Mr. Rosebury, "then you must excuse me, my dear."

"Impossible!" exclaimed all the ladies at once, and they gave so many reasons for the thing being quite impossible, and improper, and unheard of, and not to be done, &c. &c., that Mr. Rosebury gave way, staid at home, received his thirty friends, and went to bed at one o'clock with so severe a headache, that he came to the determination that he would henceforward withdraw himself, possible or impossible, from his wife's parties, that is, if he could not persuade her to lead a less idle and vain life, which he was resolved to try to do; and accordingly, for the third time, after dinner, he expressed his hope that they might for once enjoy a quiet evening.

It would fill a quire of paper if I were to write down all that was said by the ladies, when Mr. Rosebury, though in very gentle language, expressed his opinion that they had all followed the fashions and habits of the world too long, and that he began to feel that there was neither pleasure nor profit in such a life. The old lady, who was by this time nearly seventy, began upon him, and her three daughters and granddaughter followed her up, two or three speaking at a time, while the uncle laughed and added to the confusion, though he had the prudence, when he found his mother and sisters were

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getting a little angry, to tell Victoria to go out of the room, and look after her wooden babies and toys, adding, "that she was too young to understand such discussions." Mr. Morley would have been a little surprised, I doubt not, had any one told him what sort of babies and toys were possessed by Victoria, and in what manner she occupied herself with them; for the little lamb of alabaster was not the only carved image possessed by this child; Teresa had provided her with many others, some of them representing the Virgin and her Child, and others being even more shocking to persons who have any sense of holy things, and who know the commandment, viz. "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image."

So Victoria being gone out, the argument became hotter, and at length the poor father being overpowered, and feeling himself in that state of health and spirits which renders a person unable to contend, even when duty requires that he should do so, he left the room, descended the stairs, and catching up his hat which lay in the hall, passed out into the garden with a view of taking a walk. It was four o'clock, and was precisely that season of the year in which, after an early dinner, there is time to walk before sunset, for it was the middle of January, the evening was pleasant, the air being soft and balmy, and Mr. Rosebury felt that a change of scene would relieve his wounded spirits. He looked back, however, as he passed out under the gateway of the garden, and saw Victoria sauntering, as if without an object, along an alley of orange-trees. He called to her, and at the call she came bounding towards him. "Put on your bonnet, my little girl," he said, "and come with me."

Her countenance lighted up on receiving this direction, and having disappeared for an instant, she appeared again wearing a hat in the fashion of the peasants of the country, lined and trimmed with rose-coloured silk, which, being thrown carelessly on her head, exhibited a set of features on which it might have delighted any parent to look. "Will you be my companion, Victoria?" said Mr. Rosebury, in an accent which seemed to declare that he had no other; in return of which she took his extended hand, and with a motion which startled him as being unexpected, lifted it to her lips and kissed it respectfully. The tears started in the father's eyes,

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and this was the question which suggested itself to his heart: "What have I found in the world which ever interested me like this child?"

Nevertheless, when alone with his daughter he did not feel at ease. He had allowed her to become too old before he made himself acquainted with her; he saw at once that she was not that sort of child which could be won and encouraged to prattle with confitures and bon-bons; she was a child who had a character and opinions of her own, and the father knew neither the one nor the other; he therefore felt at a loss what to say to her, and he was probably not the first father who has felt the same sort of embarrassment in the presence of a son or daughter.

As to Victoria, she was still too young to feel the awkwardness of silence in such a situation. Her father had happened to turn in the direction which had been the favourite walk of Teresa, viz. that walled path which leads to Mont Alban by the chapel, mentioned in the former part of our story—a path particularly connected with the earliest remembrance of Victoria, where she had often walked with Teresa, and where she had last walked with her on the very day before the letter had come from Rome.

It cannot therefore surprise us much if Victoria, when walking with her father up this path, which in many places is very steep, had quite forgotten that he was with her, and was thinking only of Teresa, her beloved Teresa, the only person, in fact, who had supplied the wants and relieved the pains of her infancy. She was therefore startled as if from a dream when, having arrived at a fine point of view on the hill, her father stopped short and spoke to her, pointing out the long range of the indented shores of the Mediterranean as far as Antibes, and at the same time saying, "You have never been on the sea, my dear; would you like to make a voyage? would it please you to see England?"

"No, papa," replied Victoria, decidedly; "I never wish to see England, I love my own country."

"But England is my country," said Mr. Rosebury; "would you not like to see your father's country?"

"No, no," replied Victoria; "no, I hope, papa, that you will never go there."

"Do you fear the cold, Victoria?" asked Mr. Rose-

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bury, glad of any subject which might call out his daughter to speak.

"No, papa," she answered, still using the most determined manner.

"The sea, then, perhaps is your objection; do you fear to cross the sea?" said Mr. Rosebury.

"No, papa," returned Victoria; "no."

"You would not then like to leave Nice?" asked Mr. Rosebury.

"I should not mind it," she answered.

"Then why not like to go to England?" said her papa.

Victoria made no answer; and Mr. Rosebury proceeded to describe England in a way which he thought might make it seem inviting to his child; which having done, he added, "And now, Victoria, do you not think you should like to go to England?"

"No, papa, never," she replied; "I never wish to go to England."

The conversation then dropped, and they spoke no more till they arrived at that part of the height which we have mentioned before, and where Victoria remembered to have seen the old gentleman in black. Mr. Rosebury turned towards the chapel, and Victoria followed him slowly, and still silently. "What have we here?" said he, looking at the fresco painting over the door; "ah!" he added, affecting a cheerfulness he did not feel, "here we have St. James, and there are the poor souls in purgatory;" and he proceeded to remark on the absurdity of these popish fables.

Victoria made no answer; on which he turned to her, and observed that her colour was heightened, and that she looked displeased. Perhaps, thought he, these figures in the flames alarm her, and he added, "But, Victoria, you well know that these are all inventions made to frighten the poor ignorant people, and to get their money out of their pockets."

Victoria's lips moved, but she uttered no voice.

Mr. Rosebury was surprised by her manner, and stooping and looking in her face, he said, "Is any thing the matter, my love—are you tired?"

"No," said Victoria, "but I cannot—" and she burst into tears, and they were tears more of passion than grief.

"What cannot you?" asked the father, in alarm.

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"I cannot bear it—no, I cannot bear it! O, Teresa, Teresa!—my poor Teresa!"

"What is the matter?" said Mr. Rosebury. "My dear child, what grieves you? We will leave this place—you are alarmed; do I not tell you that this tale of purgatory is a frightful invention, and is all utterly false?"

"Who says it is false?" said Victoria, fixing her dark eyes on her father.

"Our Bible, our religion," replied Mr. Rosebury.

"Your religion, papa!" returned Victoria—"your religion! I do not know what your religion is."

I cannot pretend to say what passed in the mind of the father at the moment his daughter uttered these words; but it is certain that he made her no answer, and that he seized one of the pillars of the portico to prevent himself from falling to the ground, and that he did not recover himself for more than a minute, during which time Victoria was looking earnestly and anxiously up to him, being unable to comprehend his emotion, and yet at the same time being resolved not to add another word on the subject in question if she could help it, for she remembered how she had been tutored to keep her opinions from her parents.

At length, however, Mr. Rosebury was able to address his child again, and he said, "You shall soon know what my religion is, Victoria—we will read the Bible and study it together."

"I can't read English," replied the child.

"But you can speak it tolerably well," he answered, "and you can read French and Italian; there will be no obstacle then to your soon understanding the Bible in any of these languages."

Victoria made no answer; but her countenance was set as if she had made up her mind what she would do, without any reference to her father's wishes. Neither was that young mind slow in suggesting various means by which the study of that book, which Teresa had taught her that it was not proper for any one to read without the permission of the priest, might be evaded.

Mr. Rosebury then turned towards his home, kindly taking the hand of his child, and trying to carry on some sort of conversation. "I have had many engagements and employments, my dear," he said, "for years past, which have prevented me from attending to my religious duties as I ought to do; but now that I hope to have

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more leisure, I shall have great delight, I trust, in reading and talking with you, my child; and I hear, also, that there is a possibility of our having a place of worship here for the English. You will like to go to church with me, Victoria?"

Mr. Rosebury ceased to speak in this place, and looked towards his daughter, waiting for an answer; but he could not see her face from the position in which she held her head: no answer, however, came; on which he added, "Did you hear me, Victoria?"

"Yes, sir," she replied.

"Yes, sir!" said Mr. Rosebury, astonished and hurt at the coldness of his child,—and the more so because he had been brought to feel that he had neglected her, and therefore deserved this punishment. "My dear Victoria, why are you so reserved and cold—have not I often heard you prattling to Teresa, and if I, your father, invite you to treat me with the same confidence which you used towards your nurse who has left you, ought you not to be grateful, and try at least to be cheerful and obliging?"

Victoria seemed to rouse herself upon this, and after some hesitation said, "I don't understand what you say about religion—I do not know what your religion is."

Mr. Rosebury might have answered, "Neither do I myself;" for in truth he had so entirely neglected this important subject since he had been in Italy, that he had almost forgotten what, as a child, he had once known of the Bible; but he did not feel himself called upon to confess this to his daughter, and he therefore answered, "My religion is as I tell you, what you will find in the Bible, when we read it together."

"I had rather not hear about it," answered Victoria.

"About what?" asked Mr. Rosebury.

"About your religion," replied the child; "please, papa, let us talk of something else."

"You astonish me," said Mr. Rosebury, who now began, for the first time, to have some dark, yet very painful, ideas of the real state of the case; "you astonish me, Victoria; but tell me the truth, be sincere—has Teresa set you against my religion?" and he stood still, and placing his hand on the side of Victoria's head, in a manner which compelled her to turn her face towards him, added, "In one word, has Teresa set you against my religion? look at me and answer me candidly, and

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be quite sure, that if you speak the truth, I will forgive Teresa every thing she may have said."

Victoria looked up to her father as directed, fixing her dark bright eyes upon him, but retaining the steadfastness of her expression, and the answer she made was this,—"Teresa did not know that you had any religion."

The poor father could not stand this: here was a reproach of the bitterest description, conveyed by the lips of the child to whom, in the hour of depression, he had turned for comfort—and a reproach, too, which he felt he deserved, hence the more severe; but I cannot exactly say what he felt; I can only add, that he made no reply whatever to his daughter, and that neither of them spoke again till arrived at home, where they immediately separated, the father shutting himself up in his study, and the daughter returning to her usual mode of spending her evening, glad to have escaped from the searching questions of her parent.

In the mean time, the unhappy father, shut up in his study, was giving way to the horror of his feelings. "This child," he exclaimed, "this dear unhappy child has, I am convinced, been taught to consider her parents either as infidels or as heretics, and she is herself, no doubt, a papist; and whom have I to blame but myself? O my God! thou hast indeed visited my offences!"

But the account which Mr. Rosebury gave of the hours he then spent in that study are so imperfect, that I am not able to describe them exactly; he said, "that for a short time, he felt like a person in a state of derangement, that he walked up and down the room, he knew not how long, with a very quick step, groaning and weeping; all the offences of his life, and especially his entire neglect of religion, arising before him, like so many frightful spectres or avenging furies, threatening him with eternal punishment." He described himself as having been in this state so long, that the room was quite dark when he recollected himself so far as to call for lights, which being brought, he locked the door again and sat down awhile, leaning his head upon his hand, and then suddenly it was put into his mind to pray, and he knelt down, but at first could say nothing but, "Miserable—miserable—I dare not pray—I cannot pray—I am lost—lost—lost! O Victoria, my child!" and then, as it were, his paternal feelings opened his mouth, the Almighty drawing him towards himself with the cords

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of a man, that is, through the medium of natural affec tion, and he prayed earnestly and fluently, not only for this child, but for his other children, and his wife; and while he prayed the tears gushed from his eyes, and looking up, the light which stood upon the table casting a ray on a book-shelf in the room, the golden letters on a large family Bible, which had not been opened for years, struck his sight, and, as it were, pointed the way to peace; he says that he sprang up from his knees at the same instant, seized the Bible, shook the thick dust from the volume, and sat down to study the will of his God. And now we may be easy about him; he was in the right way, and He that had led him thus far, would assuredly, we feel, lead him on to the end, for faithful was He who had called him.

The first passage which he found was this: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—"This is enough!" he exclaimed: "I do labour, and I am heavy laden—I will come, but to whom must I go? to Christ, for it is Christ who speaks these words—and who is Christ? and can he fulfil his promise?—is he able?—willing he professes himself to be—can he deceive?—who is he?—what is he?—where shall I find him?" and he turned the Bible over, for he had no human guide; nevertheless the Holy Spirit, who was with him, though as yet he knew him not, so illumined his mind, that wherever he turned, in every part of the Holy Bible to which he directed his attention, he was enabled to see his blessed Saviour. He saw him in the seed of the woman who was to bruise the serpent's head; he saw him represented in the lamb offered by Abel; and, following the marginal references, he found him again in the paschal lamb, in the offering of Isaac, and, finally, on the cross, where his life was given up for the salvation of all who should be brought to believe in him. "I have found him!" he exclaimed at length, "and he is able to save me, because he is God, and he is willing, because he has said so;" and as he himself described it, "he again knelt down to pray, and again rose up to read;" and thus the hours, till nearly morning, wore away, at which time, being very weary, he lay down to rest awhile, falling asleep in a sweet frame of mind, but waking again at his usual hour, with so strong a sense of his sins and of the dreadful negligences of which he had been guilty as a father of a family, that he

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was again, as it were, like one coming into a mist, who cannot see the sun which but a moment before enlightened his path; and in this state he arose and joined the family at breakfast.

They were all together, and were busy talking over the events of the last night; telling how such a one had been well dressed, and how such another had worn too many feathers in her cap, &c. &c., when the grave looks and pale face of Mr. Rosebury brought them all to a stand, and his wife asked him with some anxiety how he felt himself.

Victoria was in the room, and therefore he made only some simple excuse for his dejected appearance; but when she had breakfasted and was called away to a master, he explained himself more fully.

"You asked me when I came in, my dear," he said, addressing himself to his wife, "if I felt myself well; I am not worse than usual, but I am in great pain of mind, and my uneasiness relates to Victoria."

"Why," said Mrs. Rosebury, "the child looks very well; what can have distressed you respecting her?"

"Perhaps," said Mr. Morley, "my brother has at length seen reason to fall into your opinion, that the little miss is not over-gifted with wisdom; but she may do very well in the world without it, as many of her sex have done—for we see every day that men do not choose the wisest women for their wives," and he bowed to his unmarried sisters.

"But," said Mr. Rosebury, impatiently, "this is not a subject for jesting; I am very unhappy about Victoria—that Italian woman has poisoned her mind, and that mind, so far from being weak, will, I fear, be found to have a strength and force which will render it very difficult for us to set that right in her which has been set wrong. She is no fool, brother Morley—but she is—"

"Is what?" said Mrs. Rosebury hastily.

"A papist!" replied the father, "and she despises her parents as infidels and heretics."

There was a silence for a moment in the room; every one present seemed to be struck,—Mr. Morley looked serious, the mother uneasy, the aunts shocked, Julia coloured, and the grandmother was the first to speak.

All the feeling respecting religion possessed by old Mrs. Morley might be summed up in her prejudice against all persons not belonging to the Church of Eng-

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land; she therefore burst out in a violent invective against Teresa, calling her an artful wicked woman, and was going on to add more, when Mr. Morley begged his brother to repeat what had passed between him and the child, which had led him to suppose her to be a papist.

Mr. Rosebury gave an account of the conversation which had taken place during his walk with his daughter; and when this was finished, Mr. Morley said, "I cannot doubt that the child's mind has been perverted as you say, that the thing is rooted in her, and that much that we have remarked as singular in her manner, and set down to folly and dulness, is owing to the influence of this false religion, which she has not dared to avow. I also apprehend, from what you say, that the little signora has a steady mind, which will not be easily turned from its course."

"Steady!" said Mrs. Rosebury; "obstinate, brother."

"That which is steadiness in a good cause may be called obstinacy in a bad one, my dear," remarked Mr. Rosebury; "but let us remember, to our shame and reproach, that had we been as faithful in teaching Victoria our own religion as Teresa has been in inculcating hers, this would not have happened, and our child would never have been able to say what she did to me yesterday, viz. 'I do not know what your religion is.'"

"A most impertinent speech, I must acknowledge," remarked the grandmother; "I should like to know what my good mother would have said to me had I ventured on such a piece of insolence—but times are strangely altered."

"Probably they are;" said the uncle; "for formerly parents did think it requisite to teach their children some sort of religion; and it was to be supposed that they had then some to teach them, of one kind or another. But now I think of it, and think how we have gone on for some years past, I do not find Victoria so much to blame as at first appeared, when she suggested her doubts as to the existence or non-existence of any religion among us."

"Really, son," said the grandmother, "you are excessively severe; we have no place of worship it is true to go to, but certainly few English families at Nice

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have set a better example than ours has done respecting religion since we have been here."

"Might I beg you, my dear madam, to explain yourself?" said Mr. Morley; "I am all attention."

"Yes," said the old lady, with an incredulous manner; "but I ask you, do we ever visit or receive company on Sundays—do I not always read a sermon on Sunday morning—and do not the young people withdraw to their rooms to do the same, at least it is my wish that they should do so—or do we ever play at cards on a Sunday—or do we eat meat on a Good Friday? and if we have not the advantages of a church to attend, is it our fault?"

"I stand corrected, madam," said Mr. Morley; "I will admit that you ladies are perfectly pious, but I fear that my brother Rosebury and I have not your merits to plead in our behalf. Granting, however, that you are all, separately and jointly, perfectly pious, yet you must allow that the influences of your religion have not happened to extend to Victoria, nor to have been made evident to her; therefore, as she can only judge of what she has seen and heard, we cannot be surprised if she has fallen into the error of supposing that we have no religion."

"What business," said the grandmother, "has a child of that age to form opinions of her own?"

"None at all," said Mr. Morley; "and therefore, instead of forming her own opinions, she has adopted those of Teresa."

"To our shame and confusion she has so done," rejoined Mr. Rosebury; "there has been some grievous error and neglect somewhere, and our child has suffered for it."

"Don't lay all the blame on me, my dear," said Mrs. Rosebury.

"I do not," replied her husband; "I blame myself more than I do you, though I do not say that you have not been very negligent; we have neglected our own souls and those of our children; we have set a bad example to our servants; we have wasted our hours and our talents, and we all stand condemned, even before our own children; for Victoria tells me 'that she does not know that I have any religion at all;' and our son writes, though in the kindest manner, to entreat me to

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take some thought for my immortal soul. But I have one comfort even in the reproaches of my children, viz. that they both have that sense of the importance of religion which I have so grievously wanted."

In reply to this, three or four voices exclaimed,—"Really, Mr. Rosebury, you are not well, and are getting into low spirits; we never heard you speak in this way before!"

"Because I never felt what I now do," he replied.

"You are nervous, my dear," said Mrs. Rosebury, "nervous and low—and you shut yourself up too much; this business of Victoria is not a pleasant one; but if you will leave her to my management, I will soon set her right; don't be uneasy about her."

"How will you set her right?" asked Mr. Rosebury.

"By proving to her that she is wrong," answered Mrs. Rosebury, "and showing how ridiculous all the ceremonies and doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church really are."

"In my opinion, the best way you could take," said the grandmother, "would be to apply a small correction. I know what my good mother would have done on such an occasion."

"I think I know enough of human nature," remarked the uncle Morley, "to say that you will never convert the little papist by castigation. Did you never hear of the old custom in England of flogging little boys at the boundaries of parishes, in order that they might remember these boundaries in old age? Now, according to this principle, you cannot take a better method of impressing the false notions of the little heretic than by applying those gentle corrections which you, madam, recommend."

"It appears to me," rejoined the father, "that we have one way only of recovering our lost ground, and of setting that right which is so grievously amiss. Perhaps, after all, in the sight of God, Victoria, with all her errors, is in a better state than any of her friends, with the exception of our dear George; she appears to be serious in her desire to serve God, though in a false way, while we are living in an utter neglect of our Creator, and, as it were, as if there were no God in the world. We are passing from time into eternity, without a thought of what that eternity may reveal; and we are hastening into the presence of a just and holy God,

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laden with the sins of many years, and wholly unprovided with any excuses for our faults."

A silence of more than a minute followed this speech of Mr. Rosebury, during which Mr. Morley looked at his watch, and pleaded that he must go out. Julia whispered to her mamma, and was sent out of the room by her, the two aunts followed, and Mrs. Morley and Mrs. Rosebury only were left. Mr. Rosebury then, to the very best of his knowledge, which was as yet very imperfect, pressed an attention to religion on his wife and mother-in-law, on which the old lady seemed to have much difficulty in restraining her anger, and the younger one rang many changes upon bad health, want of spirits, too much retirement, &c., to all of which she attributed her husband's present gloomy views. However, among them, it was settled that it would be a prudent step to dismiss Signor Carlotti from his attendance on Victoria; and the mother took it upon herself to do this in the most polite manner she could devise; she also promised that she would keep Victoria more with herself when she was at home, and that she would avoid all arguments with her respecting what her Roman Catholic attendant might have taught her.

So this conversation was terminated: but Mr. Rosebury was not contented; he had not prevailed with any of his family to adopt a change of life; there was not one who would hear him; and in consequence, he was ready to sink again into that state of despair in which he had fallen before he had opened the Bible. He went again and shut himself up in his study; and again he read and prayed by turns, not being able to see what ought to be done; perusing and re-perusing the letter of his son, to whom he wrote, begging him to come as soon as possible.

In this manner he went on for a day or two; his time being divided between these religious occupations in his study and discussions with his family, in which he seemed to gain no ground whatever, till at length he was so worn out and ill that his wife sent for a physician, and he was compelled to apply remedies which could do him no good, because his sickness was that of the soul, and to confine himself for a day or two to his bed.

On the first day on which Mr. Rosebury was confined to his chamber, when Victoria came in to breakfast, and

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missed her papa, she seemed uneasy, and asked several times for him.

"He is not well," said her mamma.

"Is he very ill?" asked Victoria.

"Not very ill," replied her mother.

A few minutes afterward Victoria repeated the question in other words, and received much the same answer; but she was not satisfied, and soon again said to her sister, "Is poor papa very ill?"

"No," replied Julia; "mamma has told you he is not."

When breakfast was finished, Victoria said, "Might I go and nurse papa?"

Her mother put her off, saying, "No; you are better away from him."

"Why am I better away from papa?" said Victoria, turning to her sister, and speaking in a low voice.

"Because you vex him," replied Julia.

"How do I vex him?" asked Victoria; "I love him dearly, better than anybody—O, I do love papa!" This was spoken for no one but Julia to hear.

"Better than anybody?" replied Julia, aloud; "better than Teresa?"

"Teresa is not here," answered the child.

"Then you mean to say that you love him better than anybody here?"

Victoria was not the sort of child to profess what she did not think; she therefore did not contradict Julia, who, addressing her mother, said, "Mamma, Victoria wants to nurse papa, because she loves him better, she says, than anybody here!"

"Upon my word, we are obliged to you, Miss Victoria," said her uncle Morley; "you are certainly more sincere than polite."

Victoria looked angrily at her sister for making this mischief, but did not speak; but Mrs. Rosebury said, "If Victoria really loves her papa as she says she does, she would not say such things to vex him as she did when she walked out with him."

"I don't remember that I did say any thing to vex him," replied Victoria, who had really had no intentions of the kind.

"Did you not tell him that he had no religion?" returned Mrs. Rosebury.

"I don't remember it," replied Victoria, changing countenance at the very name of religion.

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"My good mother," remarked Mrs. Morley, "always accustomed me to say ma'am, when I addressed her."

"Those polite old customs are not now attended to," remarked Mrs. Rosebury; "but, Victoria, I understood that you told your papa that he had no religion, and that hurt him very much; it was very impertinent of you to use such an expression."

"I did not mean it, ma'am," replied Victoria.

"What then did you mean?" asked Mrs. Rosebury.

Victoria was silent; but she looked anxiously at her mother.

"I am convinced, Victoria," said the mother, "that you are deeper than you would be thought to be: you know very well what you meant to infer, when you told your father that you did not know that he had any religion."

"I said what I thought, ma'am," replied Victoria.

"What!" said the mother, "can you possibly suppose that your father and I are infidels?"

Victoria looked on the ground; she dared not say yes, she could not say no; for in her own heart she was persuaded that her parents were the worst of unbelievers—obstinate and blinded heretics.

"Victoria," said the mother, "this trifling will serve your purpose no longer. I have a right to know what is in your mind, and I will know it—in what light has Teresa taught you to consider your relations?"

Victoria trembled from head to foot, and her complexion changed from red to pale, and from pale to red; but her countenance expressed a steadfast purpose.

"You are a papist, Victoria," said Mrs. Rosebury, losing all self-command; "and that miserable old Italian has rendered you what you are."

"Sister, sister!" said Mr. Morley; but his sister did not heed him; on the contrary, she proceeded to insist upon Victoria confessing what she had learned from Teresa, and in what light she considered her relations.

The tears started in the eyes of the child, and her lips moved; she was repeating inwardly the beginning of a prayer to the Virgin, in Latin, the meaning of which she well understood; it was this: "Salva Regina—mater misericordiæ vita—dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve;" but while her lips moved she uttered no sound. Her mother looked at her, and from her to her brother.

"You are wrong, sister," said Mr. Morley; "you are

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not equal to this contest; back out of it while you can do it with unimpeached maternal dignity." This was said in a low tone, but Mrs. Rosebury flamed upon it, and hinted that she wished her brother would leave her to manage her own child; a hint which Mr. Morley was not slow to take, for rising up immediately, he bowed to the company, and the next minute he was heard whistling the well-known air of Ca ira, as he passed under the window. In the mean time Mrs. Rosebury was still pressing her inquiries on her little daughter, insisting on direct answers to all her questions, and proceeded to threatenings in case of her persisting in silence. "Ah! mamma, mamma," said the child, dropping on her knees, "what can I say! did you not place me under the care of Teresa when I was a baby, and have I not been with her ever since? How can I tell you all she ever said to me?"

"Equivocation! art and equivocation!" said the mother; "do not kneel to me; I am no saint; rise up, and tell me at once what is the religion you have been taught."

Victoria rose, but relapsed into silence. Her mother addressed her again, laying her hand on her shoulder and shaking her, having recourse to alternate commands and threatenings, but without affecting the purpose of the child, which was to give no reply; for she remembered the injunctions of Teresa, to say as little as possible on the subject of her belief until she was of an age to make a decided confession.

"What am I to do with this child?" said Mrs. Morley, appealing to her mother.

"That is more than I can say," replied the old lady, trembling with passion; "but I remember that when I was a little girl, when I chose not to submit to my parents, I was shut up till I could bend my stubborn will."

Mrs. Morley took the hint, and seizing her daughter's arm, she turned her into a boudoir within the saloon, promising her that she should remain there till she chose to reply when her parents spoke to her.

The key was hardly turned upon the child, before Fabio, a servant whom Mr. Rosebury had hired when he first came to Nice, entered with a message from his master. This message was to this effect,—that Mademoiselle Victoria should go immediately to her papa.

Mrs. Rosebury directed the man to return to his mas-

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ter and say that the young lady had an engagement at that moment, adding, as she followed Fabio to the door of the saloon (for he was running away with only half his errand), that she herself would attend monsieur in a few minutes. In the mean time Victoria, who was standing near the door of the boudoir, had heard the former part of the message, but not the latter, and her grief was much increased by thinking that her dear papa wished to see her, and that she was not to be permitted to go to him. As to her feelings as it regarded religion, she could not have defined them had she attempted it, and she was too young for an effort of mind of this kind; but certain it was that she was under great terror whenever the idea occurred that it was possible her relations should prevail in persuading her to become a Protestant, or a heretic, as she would have termed it; and yet she could not see how she could evade speaking to them, and telling her mind to them, for any length of time. "Oh! I shall be so persecuted," she thought, "if they once become assured that I am a Roman Catholic. I do not know what they will do to me. Oh! Saint Vierge, Beata Mater ayez pitie. But I think papa will not be so cruel as the rest of them. I must go to papa; I must see him, and ask him to let me stay with him. Dear papa! he is so gentle, and he loves me—I know that he loves me. But how can I get out! I am locked in." Casting her eyes then round her little prison, she ascertained in a moment that the balcony on which the window opened was not so far from the ground but that she might descend easily from it by means of an olive-tree which grew close against the wall of the house. The idea was no sooner conceived than put into practice; she opened the window without noise, and springing over the low sill, flew like a hare across the terrace—climbed over the balustrade, seized a strong branch of the olive-tree, and swung down upon it lightly on the ground, in the sight only of an old gardener, who, in his strange patois, cried, "Well done, mademoiselle; the time was when I could have effected as much."

Victoria laid her hand on her lips, a motion well understood by the gardener, who immediately began to dig again, as if nothing extraordinary had happened; and Victoria, cowering low among the shrubs, made the circle of the house, till arrived at the window of her father's study, which she entered, and proceeding

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quickly across the floor into the alcove where her father's bed was, she threw her arms around his neck, and kissed him with all that warmth of affection which was so natural to her, and which, under proper regulation, might have rendered her a peculiarly delightful child. The caresses of his little girl brought tears into the eyes of the tender father, and he said, "But, my child, I understood that you could not come to me at present; how happens it then that you are here so soon?"

"It is that—it is that," said Victoria, "that I knew you wanted me to be with you; and now, papa, grant me one thing—promise me that all the time you are ill in bed down here I shall be your nurse, your own little nurse, and that nobody shall take me away from you."

"I will, my darling, I will," replied Mr. Rosebury; "but only on one condition."

"What is that, papa?" asked Victoria.

"That you will read to me from time to time, my little girl," replied the father; "and that you will read this book;" and he drew the Holy Bible from under his pillow, adding, "Dear Victoria, I have been trying to read this morning, but I cannot see in this alcove."

A cloud passed over the face of Victoria at the sight of the book; but the noise of a step in the passage, which was at that instant approaching the door, determined her, and she replied, "It is agreed, papa; remember, I am not to be taken away from you if I promise to read to you;" and having said so much, swift as a cat that has been robbing the pantry, and with much the same motives, she crept round the foot of the bed, between that and the wall, and there lay screened while what I am about to relate took place.

The little girl was scarcely hid in her corner, when Mrs. Rosebury entered, and stood some time without the alcove, conversing with her husband. She had that raised complexion and agitated manner which persons often have who have been angry, and are still angry, yet scarcely know how to make those with whom they converse acquainted with the subject of their displeasure. She first inquired how her husband found himself—hoped that the physician would not be late before he came—and regretted that she had some morning visits which she must make; and concluded by saying that

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she was sorry she could not send Victoria to him, as the child had a particular engagement, from which she might not, perhaps, be freed during the whole morning.

Mr. Rosebury made no answer; he saw there was something he did not understand between the mother and the daughter, and feared to make bad worse by any thing he could urge. It seems that Mrs. Rosebury expected that her husband would ask what these important engagements of Victoria might be, intending then to give him some account of their quarrel; but when this question did not come, she grew impatient, and said, "I wonder, my love, that you should wish for the child's company now you are ill; in her present state of mind she cannot be much comfort to you. I am sorry to say, that this very morning she has been excessively obstinate to me, and I have put her in penitence."

"I am sorry to hear it," said the father, "and shall see that she makes a proper apology."

"She has grieved her grandmother too," said Mrs. Rosebury; "she is a stubborn child: that Italian woman has poisoned her mind. She is, I am convinced, as bigoted a Roman Catholic as any in the whole papal world, young as she is; and all this is owing—"

Here her husband interrupted her, adding, "To our sinful neglect, in having wholly omitted to teach her what is better. Had we had half the respect for our own religion which Teresa has shown for hers, this would not have happened. Let us, then, take blame to ourselves; let us lay our mouths in the dust; and let us seek by kindness to win the dear child back into the ways of holiness. Oh, my dear, could you know what I have suffered since I have been brought to see how I have neglected the souls of my family, you would not wonder to see me reduced to this situation, and laid on the bed of sickness and agony; for who can endure a wounded spirit? who can stand up against the chastisements of the Almighty?" And the poor man, taking up a part of the sheet, covered his face, while his frame was evidently convulsed with sobs.

His wife seemed to be astonished at all this. It was apparent that she conceived that her husband was growing melancholy, and almost, indeed, deranged; and she made a long speech to him about not giving way to nervous feelings and foolish fancies; and at length, hearing the carriage drive up to the door, she made

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some hasty apologies, and left the room, promising to return as soon as possible.

She was no sooner gone than Victoria sprang from her hiding-place, saying in high glee, "Thank you, papa, for not telling about me; and now, give me the book." And the next minute she was seated on the bed, with her back to the foot-board, and the Bible open on her knees.

Mr. Rosebury weighed it in his mind, whether he should begin by inquiring into the reason of her late quarrel with her mother, or whether he should not first let her read awhile,—fearing again to excite the obstinacy of which her mother complained; and, as he afterward thought, he was divinely led to permit her to read before he ventured to touch the tender point. In the mean time, Mrs. Rosebury, having called and knocked several times at the door of the boudoir, without receiving an answer, had gone out, saying, "Well, let the haughty girl remain till I return: I shall not be absent above two hours." In the mean time, Victoria was reading to her papa: he had directed her to begin with a few of the first chapters of Genesis; and they had, together, talked over the fall of man, and the utter depravity consequent upon disobedience to God, and the first promise of the blessed Saviour; and then the tender father directed his child to the history of our Saviour's birth, in the commencement of St. Matthew.

"But," said Victoria, having read the few verses in the first chapter, which relate to the mother of our Lord, "Teresa told me that English people do not believe in the Virgin Mary; and now here it is written about her in the Bible. Do you believe the Bible, papa?"

"Yes, my dear," returned Mr. Rosebury, "I thank God that I do believe every word in the Bible."

"Then you believe in the Virgin Mary, don't you, papa?" said the child.

"I believe that such a person existed, my dear child, and that when God was made flesh, she was his mother, as to the flesh," replied the father.

Victoria did not answer immediately; but her lips moved as she was repeating to herself one of the morning salutations to the Virgin, and considering at the same time whether she had been accustomed to understand the words aright; viz. *Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,*

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ora pro nobis. This is Latin, I know, she thought; but *Mater Dei* signifies the mother of God, and *Mater Creatoris*, in the *Kyrie Eleison*, means the same.

"What are you saying to yourself, my dear?" said Mr. Rosebury.

"Does not *Mater Dei* mean the mother of God?" replied the child, not perceiving how much she betrayed by this simple question.

"Certainly," replied Mr. Rosebury; "but whose words are those?"

Victoria made no reply to this question; but said, "Do you believe, papa, that the *Sainte Vierge* was the mother of God?"

"No, certainly not," replied Mr. Rosebury; "she was not the mother of our Lord in his divine nature, but simply in his human. God is eternal; therefore he never had a beginning. Every mother, to be a mother, must be before her child; therefore God could not have a mother, because God never had a beginning. But when God, in order to save us, took upon himself the body of a man, and the human nature, he also condescended to be born of a woman, like any other baby, and Mary was chosen to be his mother: she was not, therefore, the mother of our Lord God, but of Christ, as man."

"That is hard to understand," said Victoria. "May I think about it, papa, before I say that I believe it?"

"To be sure you may," replied Mr. Rosebury. "We will read more and more, and we will pray to be taught, shall we, Victoria?"

"You will not speak ill of Teresa, papa?" replied Victoria. "I love Teresa; you will allow me to love her: she is very pious. You think it right to be pious, don't you, papa?"

"I love sincerity," replied Mr. Rosebury; "and I only wish that I had always been as earnest in my religion as she is in hers."

Victoria looked satisfied, and read on till it seemed that her attention was fatigued; at which time she closed the book, and said, "Papa, now you must go to sleep; but I may stay, may not I?"

"Will you oblige me by one thing, my little girl?" said her papa. "Will you go to your mamma, when she comes in, and beg her pardon? I know that you have been disrespectful to her and to your grandmother; I think I shall sleep sweetly if you promise this."

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The cloud was rising again on Victoria's brow on this request being made: however, Mr. Rosebury did not notice it; but, asking her to give him a pencil and a slip of paper, he wrote a note to his wife, desiring that the child might be forgiven on her making an apology, and permitted to return to him; and, putting this note into her hand, he kissed her, saying, "Carry this to your mother, my dear child, when she comes in, beg her pardon and that of your grandmother, and then, depend on me, I will protect you; and now I will try to sleep."

Victoria took the note, and, standing where she was, she saw the eyes of her father closed, and she thought he looked pale and ill. "Poor papa," she thought: "oh, I do love papa! I will not do any thing to vex him. If I do not carry this note, I shall, perhaps, be hindered from staying with him. I will carry the note, then, and say what he wishes me to say; and then I will fetch down my books and my things, and I will live in this room; I will always be here." She had scarcely been brought to this resolution, when she heard the carriage drive up to the front door. Quick as thought she ran to meet her mother, and to present the note. The ladies were not a little astonished to see her, whom they had left, as they thought, in prison, presenting herself at the door of the hall; and one and all broke out with exclamations of astonishment. She presented her note, however, and stood trembling, and again having recourse to the prayers she had been taught for help in her trouble,—for she expected that her angry relations would flame out upon her; but her mother, having read the note, and shown it to the grandmother, they spoke to each other for awhile in a low tone, and then, giving their hands coldly to the child, told her, that for this time, as Mr. Rosebury was ill and could not be distressed, they forgave her; but that they hoped she would never put their affection for her to so severe a trial again. Thus she was dismissed, and felt at liberty to devote herself entirely to her papa.

With this view, she went up to her own room, and gathered together such of her books and peculiar treasures as she thought she might want; and she put these in a basket, which she placed upon her head, not having forgotten the qualification she had acquired in her early

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childhood, viz. that of being able to balance heavy weights in this manner; and thus, having her treasures arranged after this fashion, she entered the study, and was just stepping lightly forward, in the upright attitude which is necessary in such a situation, when she found herself suddenly in the presence of her mother, who was standing by the alcove in which was the bed, arguing with her husband on some subject which seemed to have called out some of her bitterest feelings; for as Victoria stood before her, she heard her say, "You are decidedly wrong,—decidedly wrong, Mr. Rosebury."

At the sight of Victoria, she became instantly silent; and the mother and daughter stood looking at each other for a moment, while the poor father lay back, as if exhausted, on his pillow.

"Take that from your head, child," said Mrs. Rosebury; "you look like one of the poisards in the streets: as your father says, we never can sufficiently regret the unfortunate management to which you have been so long left; and no doubt you blame me, and think I have not acted a mother's part by you; but I did it for the best; and you yourself know, that unless circumstances, not dependent on me, had happened, you would have thought it very hard to be parted, when you were, from the woman who had the charge of you from infancy. But be that as it may, it is certain that I have lost the love of my child altogether; and for this misfortune I am even blamed by my husband."

"Well, my dear," said the poor father, "let this pass; kiss your child, and forget those things which are gone by, and let us hope that a better spirit may be vouchsafed us all in future."

Mrs. Rosebury did as her husband desired her: she stooped and kissed her daughter, who, instead of returning her embrace with warmth, trembled violently, as under a strong sense of fear, seeming unable to utter a single word of thanks for the condescension of her offended parent.

Mrs. Rosebury, however, had too much feeling for her husband to notice these symptoms of fear or coldness in Victoria, though she certainly felt them; for as she drew back from the child, her whole face was suffused with an angry colour. Nevertheless she withdrew without speaking: and Victoria, having watched her out of the room, immediately set herself to attend to

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her father, who, happily for himself, had not understood the manner in which she had received her mother's advances.

Mrs. Rosebury was not without anxiety respecting her husband; insomuch that she actually considered whether she should go out that evening or remain at home; but the physician happening to come in while she was in this irresolute state, and assuring her that Mr. Rosebury wanted nothing but quiet, she allowed Julia to persuade her to fulfil an engagement which she had for the evening from which she meant to return in two hours; but in this particular she failed, and actually did not appear again till after midnight. In the mean time, Victoria was always with her father, watching his smallest wants; sometimes reading to him, sometimes sitting silently at the foot of his bed; always speaking affectionately to him, and rendering herself every moment dearer to his heart. And as he felt the sweetness of this child's attentions, and thought of his son in England, he began to hope that his heavenly Father had forgiven him, and that, although he might have sorrow in this world, the effects of his sinful negligence of the concerns of his own soul, and of those of his family, would not follow them after death. I do not say that he was yet enabled to see the entire freeness of salvation, and its independence of any works which man can do; had he so done, he might already have been satisfied respecting his own soul, inasmuch as he had been brought, with the heart, to acknowledge Christ as the Saviour, and his name as that only name by which the sinner can be redeemed; yet even this assurance, had it been fully vouchsafed to him, could not have made him entirely easy, while he felt how little he had done for his wife and children; for he was a man of strong natural feelings, and these feelings, now that his heart was converted and the high importance of spiritual things was revealed to him, became the means of his severest exercises.

Hence, as he lay in bed, he was continually lifting up his heart in prayer for his family; having at one moment many sweet thoughts respecting George and Victoria, and again others deeply depressing respecting his wife and Julia.

About nine in the evening, he would have had Victoria go to her own room; but she persisted so earnestly

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in staying with him, that he caused her little bed to be made on the sofa: and many times in the night the little girl got up and came silently to his bedside to ascertain how he found himself.

The next morning he was better; but because it was one of those obstinately rainy days which sometimes occur in hot climates, it was thought best that he should not leave his room; and as the damp of the atmosphere, with occasional rains, continued during the whole of the week, he still confined himself to his study, and Victoria claimed the privilege of remaining always with him.

The infidel speaks much of fortune and chance, whereas the believer is assured that there is no such thing; and by observing the events of our past lives, we might often see how the smallest apparent accidents are sometimes productive of the greatest mercies.

Accordingly, the falling of this rain, which, to the natives of Nice, was (as they call such rains at this season of the year) as showers of oil, so was it replete with blessings to the father and daughter. They were shut up together, being little interfered with by the rest of the family; and thus leisure was given to them for much Scripture reading, whereby the mind of the father was watered with the heavenly dew, as rain descending on the broken ground, and that of the daughter enriched with Scripture knowledge, which enabled her afterward, when the season arrived in which the blessings of the Holy Spirit descended upon her, to compare the truths of Christianity with the traditions of the false church, and to discern the superiority of the one, and the error of the other; and at the same time, the natural affections of the parent were strengthened and confirmed, and those of Victoria, which were remarkably strong, directed into their proper channel.

This happened to be precisely the week before Christmas, and as the weather had quite cleared up on Christmas eve, and Mr. Rosebury felt himself recovered, he proposed dining again with his family on Christmas-day; and also informed Victoria that he thought it would be best for her to return to her own apartment, adding, that he feared her rest on the sofa could not have been so refreshing as it would have been in her own bed.

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Victoria expressed deep regret that she was not to be so entirely with her papa as she had been; and at nine o'clock, or a little after, on Christmas eve, as she took leave of him to go up to her own room, she said, "Oh, papa, dear papa, now I am going to be unhappy again."

"Nay, my love," said Mr. Rosebury, "we shall still be happy." And he said much to her on the duty of endeavouring to love her other relations, and delighting in their society as she did in his: and thus, with his blessing, they parted; while she, taking a candle, went up to her room.

She had scarcely got within the door, when she heard a gentle tap; and the next minute Bianca came in, accompanied by her niece Zenone, who was also a servant in the family.

"So, mademoiselle, you are come back to your old room," said the old servant; "and no doubt your sleep will be sweet to you this blessed night, after having spent such a week as the last."

"What do you mean, Bianca?" asked Victoria.

"What do I mean!" replied the old woman. "Why, how have you been employed?"

"In attending my father," said Victoria.

"And in what else!" asked Bianca; "in reading their books, and in betraying your friends—in procuring the dismissal of Signor Carlotti, and in betraying the confidence of those who would have saved your soul from that destruction which will come upon them all, sooner or later; for they are a bundle of heretics, prepared for the flame; they are in unbelief and condemnation, and you are little better than the worst of them. Ah, poor Teresa!" she added, "little did you think, when you reared this child, that it would come to this; and come so soon too after you had left her: but vengeance will come upon them all, and that before they think!"

"Oh, Bianca, dear Bianca, don't talk in that way!" said Victoria; "don't call me a heretic: I am not one. I have told them nothing about it; I have never mentioned Signor Carlotti's name to them; I did not know that he was dismissed; I thought he was absent on account of the holydays. I give you my word that I have never said a word about my religion to them."

"Then what has all the bustle been in the house?"

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said Bianca. "What were you shut up in the boudoir for, then? Did not Fabio see madame push you in by the shoulders? and did not he hear her ask you what Teresa had taught you? did he not stand behind the curtain, at the door, and hear all that? And have not you been shut up to hear the Bible read ever since in master's study? Don't I know all this, mademoiselle? What is it all, then, if you have not told?"

"On my word and my honour, and by the blessed Virgin, Bianca, I have never told them a word," replied Victoria. "They suspect me, I think, but I have said nothing, not a word; indeed I have not!" And she began to cry and wring her hands as in great distress.

"Well, well," said the old woman, "I hope it is so; but I wish you could see Signor Carlotti; he would advise you what to do. Will you come with me and Zenone this night? It is the holy eve of Christmas, and we are going to *Santa Reparata*, to the midnight mass. You will never have such another opportunity: your papa is in bed, and your mamma and the rest of them are at Madame Costa's; they are not to be fetched till two o'clock: we shall be safe in our rooms at that time. Will you come with us, mademoiselle?"

"Oh, do, do!" said Zenone; "it will be such delight; and then you can hear the *mass*—you never heard the *mass*—and see the bishop all in his robes. Oh, *Sainte Rosala*, they are magnificent!—and then the window which opens all like magic in the middle of the picture, and the music and the guns! By *Saint Jaques*, if I was not terrified by them out of my senses when I first heard them, and did not know what they were for."

"Peace!" said Bianca. "Is this the way to speak of holy things? Be silent, girl. But will you come, mademoiselle? Truly, the week you have passed needs a good work to restore you to the favour of the holy saints."

"But I shall be seen, I shall be known by somebody," said Victoria, trembling so that she could hardly speak.

"You shall wear my cloak, mademoiselle," said Zenone, "and my black velvet cap, with the tassels of silk."

"But it will not hide my face," replied Victoria; "they will know my face."

"Ah, I forgot!" replied Zenone. "Your complexion *à l'Anglois de creme et de vermeille*—that will not do; but

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you shall wear the black mantle of my aunt and a veil: you will look then like a novice; and you must hide your mouth: the eyes will do well enough; they are dark as my own—no one will know you. Your own mother would disown you, disguised as I will disguise you."

Zenone immediately ran to bring things for enveloping the figure and disguising the face of Victoria; and this being completed amid many bursts of merriment from the young girl—for Bianca was gone down to lock up the pantry and larder, having a great notion, even while deceiving her masters in a much more important point, of fidelity in her particular office—Victoria, all trembling and irresolute, was led down, for she was so muffled she could hardly see her way by the back stairs into an outer court of the offices, where she and her companion were to wait for Bianca, and one or two more servants, who had taken permission to attend this midnight *mass*.

It was a fine evening, and the moon was just rising above Mont Moran.

"Oh!" said Victoria, "I wish—I wish I were in my papa's study, on my little bed! Oh, I was happy last night! Do let me go back, Zenone: I don't think it is right for me to do this. It can't be right. Do let me go back."

"Pardi," said the young woman, "now you are so far, you had better go on; besides, it is a duty—you know it is a duty. You have been reading heretical books; and if you hear the *mass*, it will be a merit to set against that sin, and you may be sure that you will not be found out. But here they come, my aunt and Ursule, and Aymé and Formon, and Michael—and the doors are locked, and we can't get back without a noise, so come on." And she took one of her hands, while Bianca took the other, and away they went, the servants gathering round Victoria so as to screen her from the windows of the house, in case Mrs. Morley's maid, who was an English woman (though much too indolent to look after any of the inferior servants) might, by chance, take it into her head to look out in that direction.

It was a lovely night, though somewhat cold; that is, for this country. The moonbeams illuminated all the surrounding hill, and the soft light trembled on the path through the boughs of the olive-trees in the stony way, into which the party passed through the garden-gate.

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Then, being at some little distance from the house, it was no longer necessary to observe so much caution; but every one began to talk in the patois of the country, with little care to modulate his voice, as better educated persons would have done, especially at such an hour. But there was no fear of meeting any one who would know who they were in this retired place, unless it might be persons of their own sort. Neither had they any awe of the little lady thus jumbled among them. They knew pretty well that she would not dare to tell of them for fear of implicating herself; hence, they talked their own talk, and passed their own jests. But at the entrance of the town, the two men-servants and two women parted from Bianca: her niece and Victoria and the latter saw them no more that evening. If they attended the midnight *mass*, it was not to Santa Reparata that they went.

Being come, however, into the town, Bianca drew Victoria close to her, and admonishing her niece not to speak, they went quietly on. And now it was that the sound of bells from every steeple in the town burst upon the ear of Victoria, with occasional reports of great guns from the castle. Added to which, the crackers, which were also projected from the castle, once or twice fell upon the pavement, and ran along the ground in their very path. These caused her to cling closer to her companions; nevertheless, her fear increased when, from the wider and lighter streets, they passed into those which were more close and dark. Victoria had seldom been in the town at this hour, and never on foot; and she was struck with the gloom of the scene. The houses in Nice are very high, the streets are not lighted, and this night there was no one to be seen in them, excepting at the doors of the churches. It was about half-after ten or near eleven when she and her companions arrived at Santa Reparata.

This is the metropolitan church of Nice, situated in a narrow street, in the vegetable market. The inside of this church is a cupola, raised in fine proportions; its form is that of a cross; and there are shrines or altars, of various saints, placed all round the walls within. It is a very extensive and beautiful building, and was already crowded when our party entered; the people being seated in chairs along the centre and through the aisles, the pillars of the church being hung with crimson

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cloth for the occasion, that is, for the celebration of the birth of our Lord, which is presumptuously asserted by the papists to have taken place exactly at twelve o'clock on Christmas eve. The church was lighted up, every altar having candles burning amid all the childish paraphernalia of images, pictures, relics, and artificial flowers, commonly collected on these shrines, which were thus displayed, though imperfectly, through all the extent of this great building. The high altar stood in a recess, which might be supposed to form the head of the cross. This recess was beautifully adorned with stone carved work, having a crimson canopy hanging from the centre of the roof. About the middle also of this recess stood a screen, which, in consequence, left a wide space in the shade behind. This screen was composed of various ornaments, such as vases, urns, and pillars, fancifully grouped, and being, apparently, of burnished gold, with some intermixture of ornaments in crystal, of violet and green, shining splendidly by candle-light. In the centre of the screen, and at its highest point, was an arch, formed by wreaths of large flowers, in bright gold, or rather in what seemed to be bright gold; under which hung a star of a silvery hue, from which proceeded, from time to time, coruscations of light, shooting in various directions. Perhaps this might be intended for the Star of Bethlehem.

The screen was so formed as to leave an arched doorway on each side, through which might be discerned, in the gloomy recess beyond, various figures in black gowns and white stoles, passing and repassing. It was from these door-ways that the officiating priests came out, and through which they retreated. But when Victoria and the servants entered, there was no one in the area before the high altar, which was raised on steps, just beneath the golden arch and star before described; but there were a multitude of priests and choristers, and other functionaries of the pageant, ranged around the altar, both within and without, all being arrayed in black gowns flowing to their feet, and stoles of lawn. There were also soldiers, to the number of twelve, who stood motionless almost as statues, forming an avenue from the steps of the altar along the central limb of the cross.

Bianca caused chairs to be set for herself and the young people, where they might see what passed, and

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where the person of Victoria was thrown into the shade by a pulpit set against a pillar; from which pillar extended a long black arm and hand, holding a cross, on which was a figure representing our dying Lord; the object of which was, no doubt, to admonish the preacher of what ought to be the subject of his addresses to his hearers; for it may not, perhaps, be out of place to remark, on this occasion, that the Roman Catholic Church chiefly delights, even in its purest forms, and when giving those instructions which are most free from error to its members, to dwell on the objects of faith rather than those of hope; on the dying rather than upon the rising Saviour; on the Lord in his character rather of the slaughtered Lamb than of the Lamb on Mount Zion, when he shall have gathered together his elect from the four winds of heaven. And it is also to be remarked, that all preachers who are in any way imbued with the spirit of popery have a tendency in their discussions to look backward rather than forward; and hence they delight rather to speak of the Aceldama, where our Lord is not, than of the glory in which he is, and in which he will speedily reveal himself to all those who love his appearance.

But Victoria, being seated, and having recovered a little from her tremor, her eyes being fixed in admiration on the scene presented by the altar, with all its brilliant decorations, found herself at leisure and in a capacity to attend to what was passing.

The church was full of people, but nobody moved; and from the hollow behind the screen proceeded a loud, discordant sort of chant, in the most lugubrious tones, as of many voices, small and great, bass and treble, and uttering articulate sounds, yet in an unknown tongue.

"What is that? What are they saying?" whispered the child. "What are they doing?"

"Hush!" said Bianca, "they are preparing for the mass."

"How dismal!" said Victoria. "Oh, I wish I were at home. If papa should ask for me—"

"Peace!" said Bianca; and Victoria was silent. But the monotonous and yet dissonant moaning went on, and suddenly a window opened on the left wing of the church. This window seemed to be in an inner wall, and was within the frame of a large picture, of which

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when closed, it seemed, by this light, to form a part. This window was such as we must all have seen in very old houses, being low and wide, and crossed with bars in small squares, or rather lozenges; in this instance, the bars being gilt, a light from within rendered them more visible. It was opened wide, and an infant, for a moment, was held at the window. An old man, with white hair, next presented himself; and after a little while this window was shut. "What is that?" said Victoria. "What is that baby, and that old man?" Bianca made no reply: she seemed lost in thought; and Victoria was afraid of speaking to her again.

At length, the dismal chant, spoken of above, suddenly ceased; and the Bishop of Nice, with various inferior clergy, entered upon the scene, passing and repassing out by one archway of the screen, and in by another, bowing as they passed, or rather courtesying, to the altar,—going up the steps and kneeling down,—singing a few stanzas in Latin, in recitative, in which many voices joined, and then hastily passing away and leaving room for others. At length, the organ, which was quite at the farthest end of the church, began a kind of low flourish,—then swelled into its loudest tones. The priests first joined in the chorus, then the whole congregation, till the high roof rang again. The strain was sweet, but so deeply melancholy that Victoria, who had undergone much agitation during the last two hours, burst into tears; and at that instant, had the proffer been made to her, she would have consented at once to give up all she held dear on earth, and all the gay prospects so natural to youth, and devote herself to the retirement of a convent,—a life which had so often been described to her by Teresa, as the highest state of holy peace and joy on earth; but the dull ceremonies of the popish ritual which followed—the bowings of the priests—the tossing about of incense—the sacrifice of the *mass*, of which she could see nothing but the grimaces and contortions of the functionaries, let her down again from this high tone of irrational enthusiasm, and she began to grow impatient and very uneasy, and anxious to be at home; and her uneasiness was greatly increased by Bianca, who, a short time before twelve o'clock, suddenly got up and left the church, directing Victoria to stay where she was with Zenone till her return. Victoria from that time saw nothing distinctly which passed

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at the altar. Her head became confused,—her heart beat, and her eyes were dazzled by the flitting figures of the priests in their white floating draperies. At length, it being near the hour of twelve, another recitative, in which several voices joined, was commenced. This at first was loud, but gradually became lower and lower, and more and more distant, as if those who sang were retreating to some very remote part of the wide building, the sounds dying away in very distant strains. And when the attentive ear was hardly able to catch the last low note, the deep tone of the clock, high in the tower, began to toll the midnight hour; the organ at the same instant burst forth into the loudest strains; the priests united in one mighty chorus, and the very edifice itself seemed, as it were, to feel the concussion of the great guns which were fired from the castle at the token of the midnight bell.

It was at this instant that Bianca, touching the shoulder of Victoria, bade her rise and follow her. Victoria did not know that she was near her; she had seen her go, but had not seen her return: she was therefore more startled at this sudden summons. She, however, rose instantly, and taking the arm of Zenone, they pressed through the crowd after Bianca.

Bianca did not lead in the direction of the principal entrance at which they had come in, but along the right aisle of the church, till coming to a narrow pointed door, she pushed it open, and the next minute Victoria found herself in a long damp passage or gallery, partially lighted by a lamp hanging from the vaulted roof.

"Where are we going?" said Victoria, whose young heart beat with excessive terror. "Pray let us go home. Papa will call for me! I shall be missed! Please to let me go home!"

"Be silent!" said Bianca, "and do not fear. Are you not in the precincts of the holy church—on sacred ground?"

The child was silenced, and followed Bianca, who marched firmly and with steady purpose along the gallery.

The choral harmony within the church had not ceased, and was still heard by them, though more and more remotely, as they proceeded; but, in measure as the sounds of the music and voices became fainter, those of the guns and of the bells became more and more distinct,—

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the reverberation running along the coved roof, and causing a sort of tremulous motion in the air, which added to the terror of Victoria. Being come to the end of the passage, a door in the wall presented itself, at which Bianca knocked. The signal was not immediately answered, and the affrighted child took this occasion to implore that she might be taken back immediately; but these entreaties, instead of having any effect in influencing Bianca to do that which was required of her, seemed to excite all that was violent in her Italian nature; for she turned sharply round on the child, having wholly forgotten their respective situations. "By Santa Reparata, under whose roof we are," she said, "had I known how far your heart is from that truth in which you were so carefully educated, I would not have troubled myself with you, as I have done, but would have left you to perish with the rest of your country people. What have I but your interest at heart? Of what do you suspect me?—of what are you afraid? Have we not two good hours before us, before we need be at home? And if I would obtain for you the blessings of the church, and absolution for what you did during the last few days, does it become you to suspect me, and to doubt my fidelity? But," added she, "tell me, in one word, is your heart turned to the heresy of your fathers? Have you betrayed Teresa? Are you deceiving me? Speak but the word, and I will take you home, and never again trouble myself with your concerns."

"Oh, Bianca—dear Bianca!" replied the trembling child, "don't speak so; don't frighten me! O that I knew what was right!" And she burst into tears.

"Right!" repeated Bianca; "and do you doubt? do you hesitate? Then come back with me. I see that you are in unbelief. Let us hasten from this sacred place, lest the stones of the roof should fall and crush you to atoms."

"O no—no!" replied Victoria, looking up with terror to the heavy stones in the arches above her head,—"no! I am not an unbeliever, Bianca; I have no doubts of the truth of the Holy Catholic faith. I know no other, and I desire to know no other. I will go with you wherever you wish, only do not threaten me; do not utter such words against me. I am a believer." And the poor

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child crossed herself, as Teresa had taught her to do, and began to repeat her Ave Maria.

Bianca looked at her for an instant, and the severity of her countenance relaxed: and as she knocked again at the door, she uttered a blessing upon her. The second signal was answered immediately by a young man in the dress of a novice, bearing a candle in his hand. It was evident that the party was expected, for without asking a question, he led the way through a passage within this door, into a hall, in the centre of which was a large table, covered with a cloth, on which were scattered several huge folios. At the farther end of this hall was a sort of a small closet, or rather chapel —for the form of a crucifix was visible in a niche between two small windows, being rendered so by a light which burnt before it.

At the moment that Bianca and the young people entered in at one door, a person in a dress similar to that of the priests who were assisting at the altar came to meet them from the other; and though Victoria had never seen him clothed exactly in the same way, she immediately knew him to be the Padre Carlotti.

At the sight of him she drew back, feeling him to be a man injured by her family, and perhaps by some imprudence of her own; and his manner, for a moment, indicated the same feeling. But on Bianca assuring him that she believed that the heart of the little signora was still faithful to the church, he took her hand, and asked her in a solemn manner what her motive was for seeking him thus in his own apartment. "For observe, signora," he said, "that your relations cannot say that I have sought you, or have ever conversed with you on the subject of religion but at your own request. On the contrary, I have rather occasion to take blame to myself for a sinful backwardness in this particular."

"No one can blame you, sir," replied Victoria; "but I am very unhappy—I do not know what is right—I wish I knew—and I fear that it may be an injury to you ever to have known me."

"Not at all," replied the Padre Carlotti. "I am about to leave this place for another country. I go after the Christmas holydays. I shall probably never see you more, my daughter, on this earth. May it please the Holy Virgin and her blessed Son that we may meet in paradise! But much depends on yourself. If you for-

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sake the light you now have, and turn to the errors of your fathers, I can give you no hope."

Bianca then proposed that the Padre Carlotti should take the signora apart to converse with her; and accordingly, he led Victoria into the little oratory above mentioned, leaving the door open, that Bianca might still have her eyes on the child, of whom she had so strangely assumed the charge. And being thus placed, a conversation ensued of more than an hour's endurance, although Victoria never could give any exact or particular account of it. Whether from fatigue, or terror, or previous agitation, it seems that the impressions which she received from this conversation were so confused, that when speaking of it in after-times to her brother, she could only remember that the Padre Carlotti had brought her to a very explicit confession of her actual sins, and even to acknowledge things that she had never thought of before; that after these confessions, he had repeated some prayers in Latin on her behalf; that he had given her some most frightful ideas of Protestants, whom he called heretics of the worst sort; and had assured her that there was no salvation beyond the pale of the Holy Roman Church: however, he dismissed her with his blessing, giving her a little book particularly adapted to her situation. It was half-after one when the Padre Carlotti dismissed Victoria; and, in consequence, there was scarcely time for the party to get home before Mrs. Rosebury might be expected.

Bianca had not been aware how late they had been detained, until she heard the clock of Santa Reparata, and after that the clock of every church in Nice, striking the hour of two, just as they were approaching the garden-gate. She had her pass-keys, and she succeeded in letting her party into the garden with the smallest possible loss of time; but they were unfortunately circumstanced. In order to get to the back door of the house, they must needs pass the northern and eastern fronts; and in like manner, a carriage, coming in by the road, was obliged to pass the southern and eastern sides. So that, if by accident they should fall in with the carriage, the two parties must needs come in contact: and so it happened. At the precise instant in which Bianca and her companions came up the garden, the carriage entered it on the other side; and though Bianca and the young people flew for it, they met the carriage just at

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the south-east corner of the house, and were obliged to draw up to save themselves from being run over.

The moon was set indeed, but it was bright starlight, and Mrs. Rosebury, seeing certain figures ranged against the wall of the house, huddled together in the shade, pulled the check-string, and called out, "Who is there at this hour?"

"Me, ma'am," said Bianca, stepping forward.

"You, Bianca!" exclaimed the lady; "and what may you be doing here at this strange hour?"

"I have been at the *mass*, madame," she replied; "the holy *mass*,—it is Christmas eve."

"And who have you with you?" asked the lady.

"My niece, Zenone, madame," replied Bianca.

"But I see a third person behind,—a little one," said the lady.

"It is only Babette, the gardener's daughter," replied Bianca, with unmoved effrontery.

"Well, make haste to your bed," said the lady; "I do not approve of these late doings;" and she ordered the carriage to drive on: while Bianca, in the patois of the country, remarked, that she conceived that it was quite as profitable to encroach upon the night for religious duties as for earthly pleasures; but Zenone and Victoria did not stay to answer her; they ran swiftly to the back door, and Victoria, having thrown off her disguise in the passage, flew to her room, and did not think herself safe till she was in her bed.

There is an old wise saying, "That man appoints, and God disappoints;" and the truth of this was experienced by Mr. Rosebury, on Christmas morning: for he was scarcely risen, when a letter was put into his hand, sent by a special messenger from Antibes. This letter was from a certain elderly nobleman, distantly related to Mrs. Morley, saying, that he, with his lady, was come as far as Antibes, with a view of spending a few days at Nice, and eventually proceeding to Italy, but was there detained by a severe attack of illness; and, at the same time, requesting Mr. Rosebury, if it were possible, to come to him where he was. Mr. Rosebury submitted this letter to the family conclave assembled at breakfast; and it was then decided, *nemine contradicente*,* that he should procure a passport, and

* Nobody opposing.

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proceed to Antibes as speedily as possible, Mr. Morley undertaking to accompany him. Mr. Rosebury was not, however, quite pleased with the idea of leaving Victoria at this time; however, the little journey was determined upon, and the two gentlemen were on their way to Antibes within a few hours of the receipt of the letter.

But before Mr. Rosebury left the house, he hinted to his lady that he trusted she would avoid a quarrel with Victoria; to which she replied, "Be assured, my dear, that I shall not seek one."—"And as she is inclined," he added, "to read the Holy Scriptures, do take the occasion of hearing her: the exercise may be a reciprocal benefit." Mrs. Rosebury promised her husband that his wishes should be attended to. And it is possible that the lady might think, at the same time, that should her son George arrive soon, it would be well for him to find her in the habit of hearing the Scriptures read now and then in the house; for although she affected to treat the admonitions of her son with the greatest contempt, yet she was inwardly persuaded that he had some truth on his side.

In the mean time, Victoria had slept to a much later hour than usual; neither would her father allow her to be disturbed, alleging that he feared she had had many bad nights during her attendance on him: she therefore did not arrive in the saloon till the carriage was driving away. "Who is going out?" was her first question, as she heard the wheels rattling over the gravel.

"Papa and uncle Morley," replied Julia; "they are gone to Antibes, to meet Lord and Lady M——; they will be out some days."

"Papa gone out—and for some days!" exclaimed Victoria, and she stood still in the middle of the room, like one astounded.

"Well, and what then!" said Julia; and she called the attention of her mother to Victoria.

Had that poor child at that moment had one friend whom she could feel that she could trust, what a blessing it would have been for her; how much pain it might have spared her!—for she had suffered so much during the past night, and had endured such horrors in her morning sleep, that she had almost brought her mind to open her whole heart to her father. It was therefore an astounding blow to her when she heard that he

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was gone out, and had not even settled when he would return.

"What do you stand there for, Victoria?" said the grandmother; for Mrs. Rosebury did not speak, although her eye had been directed by Julia to the child. "Cannot you live a day without papa, although you are surrounded by so many other dear relations—or rather, relations who ought to be dear?"

This reproof, or rather the voice by which it was uttered, had the effect of awakening Victoria from her revery; and accordingly she took her place at the breakfast table, though she ate little,—something seeming to rise in her throat whenever she attempted to swallow. But Fabio was in the room, and as he moved in various directions in obedience to certain commands of his mistress, she observed that his eyes were continually upon her. She aroused herself again on observing this, and tried to affect an air of unconcern.

While this was passing, the ladies were discussing their morning employments; and as they could not go out, because the carriage was engaged, and as it seemed that so much was said about religion, they agreed that they would sit down to work and draw, while Victoria should read the lessons of the day to them; the old lady remarking, with an expressive toss of her head, that even if the self-elected censor of the family, viz. Master George, should happen to drop in during the exercise, he would be rather surprised to find that there was not quite so much reason for his reproofs as he expected.

"He would be deprived of a great pleasure, then," remarked Julia; "for I have no doubt that he likes to think how much holier he is than we are."

These plans being determined upon, Fabio was directed to arrange the table before the sofa, and also to fetch up the large book which lay upon the desk in the study.

"Now," thought Victoria, "now comes the heat of the battle. What shall I do?" And having finished her breakfast, she was slipping quietly out of the room, though she hardly knew with what purpose, when she was called back, and directed to take her place at the table. She had scarcely done so, when Fabio appeared with the book.

"Lay it before Mademoiselle Victoria," said the

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mother, addressing Fabio; "then clear the table and shut the door."

While Fabio was clearing away the breakfast, Miss Morley produced a very elegantly bound prayer-book (which, by-the-by, looked as new as when purchased ten years before in Piccadilly), and pointed out the lessons of the day, while Mrs. Rosebury found them in the Bible, and without moving it from before Victoria, she placed an invitation card of Madame Orengo's for a ball, on New-year's day, in the second lesson, leaving the Bible open at the first.

"And now, Fabio," she said, "we are going to be engaged; go out and shut the door."

The eyes of Fabio spoke a language which Victoria well understood, and she was the only one who observed that, having half-closed the door, he knelt down on the ground with his face at the opening, though so artfully concealed by the damask curtain that hung before it that no part of his face was visible but one dark eye, which twinkled through a small slit in the curtain itself,—a slit which probably owed its existence to some service of the same kind.

And now all things being quiet, and the ladies prepared with their needles and pencils, Mrs. Rosebury gave the word of command that was to stir up a warfare of which she was little aware.

"Now, my dear," she said, resolving to be as kind as her nature (which was by no means a very tender one) would permit, "now, my dear, we are ready—*commencez*."

Victoria's eyes were on the book; her person was motionless; neither did she utter a sound.

Mrs. Rosebury pointed with the scissors, which she happened to have in her hand, to the beginning of the chapter, saying, "There, Victoria, that is the place."

No motion of the lips, no voice, no sound followed, and the mother again said, "*Commencez!*"

The silence continued; Mrs. Morley, and every one round the table, looked up, and the mother, now beginning to apprehend that there was some determination in the case, passed from the tone of gentle entreaty to that of command. "Victoria," she said, "why don't you read?" No reply was given. "Read, I say!" said Mrs. Rosebury; "it is your father's orders that you should read to me, and read the Bible." Still no answer, neither did Victoria move, but she became excessively

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pale, and was seized with a violent tremor. At that moment there was a slight movement in the damask curtain, seen only by the terrified child, on which she started, and, by the same motion, closed the book; whether purposely or accidentally, she probably herself could not have told. But this action had the effect of provoking Mrs. Rosebury to such an extreme, that, without further deliberation, she applied her open palm, and gave her daughter what is elegantly termed a box on the ear.

Victoria started up at this, and drew back, and the mother rose too, and seized her arm. "Read you shall, mademoiselle," she said; "it shall soon be seen who is mistress, the mother or the daughter;" and she endeavoured to force her back to the seat she had left; but Victoria's eye was upon the curtain, and, being unable in any other way to resist her mother, she fell on her knees, bowing before the angry hand which had already bestowed more than one blow on her cheek.

The voices of the grandmother and the aunts, one encouraging the mother to be firm, and the others entreating Victoria to give way, filled the apartment, and might have been heard at some distance; and no doubt it served to call many of the domestics into the gallery, and among the foremost of these Bianca, who knew pretty well to what to attribute the uproar, even before Fabio could withdraw from his post to explain it.

But Victoria did not dare to give way. Accordingly, neither blows nor entreaties had the smallest effect upon her; threatenings were, if possible, of still less avail. And at length, Mrs. Rosebury, in real alarm and distress, knew not what better to do than to bid her go to her chamber, and stay there till she could humble herself, and submit to her duty. Victoria heard this decree of banishment as the voice of a reprieve; and betrayed so much alacrity in putting it into execution, that as soon as she had left the room, having narrowly escaped tumbling over Fabio, who had resumed his post at the door, the grandmother remarked, "That more harm than good would be done if the child were not well watched and guarded in the apartment; for," she added, "can we be assured that the Roman Catholic servants will not take part with her?—We must lock her in," she said; "and let my maid Evans attend her. I dare say, that if she has only bread and water there, and none of her toys

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and books, she will soon be tired of the contest and give way."

"I hope she will," said Mrs. Rosebury, whose passion had given way to tears, for she was thoroughly vexed at the obstinacy of the child, and not without a secret sense of blame for her own neglect of her daughter, "because I am certain of this, that Mr. Rosebury will charge me with imprudence, and say that I might have avoided this altercation."

"I do not see that at all, sister," said Miss Morley. "You could not have foreseen that she would refuse to read the Bible, as she read it continually to her papa while he was ill."

The ladies then proceeded to discuss among themselves the character of Victoria, and its various inconsistencies; and being thus engaged, they delayed sending for Evans, as they had proposed to do, in order that immediate measures might be taken to shut up the little offender in her tower. But Fabio was not so slow; having heard all he wished to hear, he ran with his report to Bianca. In consequence of which, Zenone came, all out of breath, to Victoria:—"We must hide all you would wish them not to see, signora," she said! "give me your books, your crucifix, the Virgin and Child, and the *Agnus Dei*, and I will put them where you can get them, but where they will not think of looking for them." With that, she pulled the bed from the corner where it stood, and discovering a cupboard in the lower part of the wainscot, she threw into it all the books and relics, &c. which had been from time to time given to Victoria by Teresa, and others of the same way of thinking. And then she added, "You can get these as you want them, by creeping round the bed; but mind you draw the bolt before you take them out; and here is a ball of whipcord, which I have hid in the corner: let it down from the turret window when you hear me singing in the base-court, and we will see that you have something sent to you in a basket which is better than bread and water." So saying, she pushed the bed back into its place, and was out of the room in a minute.

The solemn and stately Mrs. Evans next appeared. "I am come, Miss Victoria," she said, as she moved slowly into the chamber, "to do what is extremely unpleasant to me, viz. to turn the key upon such a young lady as you are, and for such a reason too, because you

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refuse to read the Holy Bible on a Christmas-day. Surely, Miss Victoria, you are not a heathen, that you entertain a disrespect for the Holy Scriptures? And you must know, I am sure, that of all the days in the year, this is the day which ought to be attended to; for my part, I never missed the sacrament in my life on a Christmas-day, till I came to this place."

"Mrs. Evans," replied Victoria, "you must do as you are bid; and I cannot blame you. Indeed, I am very unhappy, but you cannot help me: nobody can help me; I am too miserable."

"But why, my little lady," said Mrs. Evans, "why should you be so unhappy? What is required of you but what every young lady should delight to do? Is there so great a hardship in reading the Holy Scriptures? When I was a little maid in my own village, I read them every day to my old grandmother; and I was proud to do so."

"You were a happy child, then," said Victoria; "for at least you meant well, and God forgive you if you did wrong. But do not think to persuade me. I cannot—will not read."

"Well, I do not understand it," said Mrs. Evans. "But I have been desired, Miss Victoria, to take away your books."

"What books?" asked Victoria. "My lesson-books are all below."

"But you have some others, it is thought," replied Mrs. Evans.

Victoria made no reply, but walked to the window, and leaning her head against the frame, seemed to take no notice of the strict search made by the old servant throughout the chamber. Mrs. Evans, however, finding nothing to her purpose, would again have attempted to engage Victoria in conversation, but could obtain no other answer than floods of tears; she therefore soon desisted, and went out, locking the door after her; to which the little prisoner presently added a bolt within.

But now, the unhappy child being left in her apartment without opposition or encouragement, in silence and in solitude, having no one near her whom she loved, felt a sinking of the heart, such as before she had never experienced; so having bolted the door, she walked back

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to the window, and leaned again upon the sill, her head resting upon her hands.

Her window was high, and the situation of the house, on that side, abrupt and precipitous, yet covered in many parts with olive groves; beyond which were the Bay and Castle of Nice, and the whole line of coast, as far as Antibes, whose towers were visible in the remote distance.

"Papa," thought Victoria, "dear papa, is now passing along the shore. Oh, beloved papa, how happy I was with you!—those few days—those few short days which I spent alone with you! and how very miserable am I now!—and I must be miserable still; I see no way for my escape. If I leave the truth to please them, then I shall have to endure the eternal punishments due to heretics. The fire, the torments which last for ever! What are my present trials to these fires? or to what the holy martyrs suffered? And then, Bianca, that terrible Bianca, I am sure that she would find means to punish me. Did she not speak but last night of the stones falling from the buildings on the head of those who deny the truth?" And the poor child dropped on her knees, and began to pray, repeating these words:—*Sancta Maria, Sancta Dei Genitri, Sancta Vergo Virginum, Mater Christi, Mater Divinæ Gratia, Mater Creatoris, Mater Salvatoris, ora, ora, ora!* Repeating the words with increasing vehemence, till, totally exhausted, she sunk on the floor, remaining awhile in a state of stupidity; for grief, and terror, and enthusiasm had quite overpowered her young mind.

At length, her thoughts began to work in another direction, that is, towards the awful fate of certain heretics, of which she had accounts in a book given her by Teresa; and she considered for a moment whether she might venture to go to the closet and get out this book; and again, what she could do with it in case anybody came. At length, she determined to lay it outside the ledge of the window, and give it a push down into the yard if there was any appearance of the person approaching the window. Thus, my young reader, you may perceive how the mind of this unhappy child was gradually subjecting itself more and more to deceit; so that it was become to her more easy than that which is straightforward. Yet, I know not whether I am not falling into error myself while endeavouring to caution

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others, since it is my firm belief that crooked ways are much easier to the unconverted man than those which are direct and straight; and that therefore, as parents cannot bestow upon their children the blessings of a new nature, although the believing parent may be assured that the child whom he intrusts to his heavenly Father's care will be made a partaker of the heavenly gift, in due time, they ought to do all that in them lies to remove from their offspring the temptation to deceit, by carefully obtaining their confidence, by making them to understand that they are not easily to be taken in by false pretences, and above all, by taking care that people of whose principles they are not perfectly assured do not obtain an influence over them. These are, after all, but cautionary motives which I am endeavouring to impress, and are all inferior to the divine principle of truth, which, when once implanted in the heart, renders these cautions, to a certain degree, of no consequence. Nevertheless, as I before said, I consider them to be worthy of general attention.

But Victoria having formed her plan respecting the book above mentioned, crept into the corner and got it out; but she had scarcely done so when she heard the key turn in the lock. Swift as thought, she placed the book in such a way without the window, that whosoever should attempt to close it should throw it down into the base-court; and having so done, she withdrew the bolt, and admitted Mrs. Evans, bearing a slice of bread and a glass of water.

"Your mamma, Miss Victoria," said this respectable servant, in a solemn tone, "wishes to know if you are willing to come down and obey her commands."

The time during which Victoria had been left to herself had served to strengthen rather than to shake her resolution. She therefore replied, with increased firmness, "Mrs. Evans, I am sorry that you have so much trouble on my account. If my mamma's commands are that I am to read the Bible, I cannot obey them."

"Astonishing!" exclaimed Mrs. Evans. "One would think that it was a very hard thing which your mamma required of you."

"If mamma asked me to work for her night and day, or to serve her barefoot, or to burn my hand in the fire, I should think it right to submit, Mrs. Evans," replied Vic-

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toria; "but I will not obey the command to which you allude."

"This is past my understanding, miss," said Mrs. Evans; "and I must say that it is enough to provoke any parent, to see a young lady so determined not to humble herself."

"I am not determined not to humble myself," returned Victoria. "I will beg pardon, if mamma wishes; but, once for all, Mrs. Evans, I will not read the Bible, neither to-day, nor to-morrow, nor any other day."

"Mercy upon us!" cried Mrs. Evans. "Did one ever hear any thing like this! Miss Victoria, I fear, indeed I fear, that what I have heard is then true."

"What have you heard?" asked Victoria, who at that moment was thinking of her midnight excursion.

"That you are a papist and a heretic; and that those wicked Roman Catholics have turned you to their abominable idolatry."

A voice at that instant, speaking in French, and in no very mild tones, made Mrs. Evans turn round. It was Bianca, who, happening to pass by at this crisis, had caught and comprehended the few last words; and her irritation getting the better of her prudence, she had taken up some of the most offensive expressions used by Mrs. Evans, and was giving her to understand that she had no notion of a foreigner and a heretic coming into her country to abuse the natural inhabitants thereof. Mrs. Evans had the prudence, on receiving this unexpected attack on her rear, to close the gates of the fortress in her front, and to pocket the key; on which, Victoria ran from the window, where she had her eye on her book, to the door, where she listened attentively, and not without anxiety, to what was passing outside.

But there was an impediment which prevented the altercation between the two conflicting parties without from coming to any explanations that might prove dangerous to Victoria, for the unhappy child had an excessive dread of her midnight exploit being known; and this was, that Mrs. Evans could not put six words together in French, and Bianca knew as little English.

Hence, Mrs. Evans having said, "*Vous cuisinier esprit, vos affaires*,"* marched away; while Bianca, whose anger

* The *literal* meaning of these words is, "You cook, mind your own business."—*Publishers*.

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was at its highest flow, burst forth in her own patois to her niece, who it seems had joined her as soon as Mrs. Evans had left her.

As Victoria afterward told her brother, nothing ever tended to open her mind, upon reflection, to the danger of being, as she was, in the power of an ignorant and violent person of a different religion to that of her father, than what escaped from Bianca at that period. It would not become me to repeat what she said; but Victoria heard her pray for the eternal destruction of all heretics, and especially for that of her masters and mistresses; and she also heard her say, though in a lower tone, as she passed away along the gallery, that she wished it would please the Almighty to take the young one to himself before her parents should have time and opportunity to force her back into their own false and abominable way of thinking.

Victoria also heard some one, she believed it to be Zenone, entreating the old woman to command herself, although, as she (that is, Bianca) was speaking in the lowest patois, there was little fear of her being understood by any other of the family than by the little prisoner in the tower.

It may be more easily conceived than described what the feelings of this poor child were when all sound of voices had again ceased, and she found herself in total silence. She sat down at the foot of her bed, having taken the book out of the window, and her mind could rest upon no other point but that of the return of her papa; and then she said, "And then I will open my whole heart to him; I will tell him all: but what will come of this confession? I must then be a heretic, and then I shall be lost that way. I shall die in horrors—I shall go to hell—I shall, I shall;" and she burst into tears. These tears relieved her, and she then recollected that she had the little book of prayers given her by M. Carlotti in her pocket, and she thought it might suit her peculiar situation. She was not mistaken; it was addressed to a person under persecution from unbelieving relations, and gave her a new view of her situation, and one which was very pleasing to her. She was under persecution she found, in prison, and made to live on bread and water, and that for the sake of the true faith she was then a martyr, a santa—a Santa Victoria; and when her story should be told, she would be

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numbered with the Santa Rosalias, Santa Marias, Santa Cecilias, and a thousand other holy women. This was a new light, and a very flattering one, thrown upon her dark state; and while this humour lasted, she opened the book of legends, and read all the wonders which it contained in the spirit of one who reads the description of a treasure of which he feels that he is to have a share.

She was presently so deeply absorbed in these wonderful narratives that she for a time seemed to have forgotten her own particular situation; when, at length, near the end of the volume, she was struck with the title of a narrative which she did not recollect to have read before; this was "The Vision of Marie Arnaudi." The story under this title was long, and entered into many particularities. It seems that this lady was a Protestant, or rather, as the story says, a heretic, having been converted by that first of heresiarchs Martin Luther, during a visit paid from Rome, her native place, to an aunt in Germany. It seems also that she had married in Rome, and secretly converted her husband. It also appeared that this heretical couple had had seven children, all of whom had died in infancy, although they had been confided to the especial care of Ippolita, the foster-mother of their father. It seems that after the death of the last of these, Ippolita had also died, and that the afflicted parents were about to leave Rome and repair to Germany, where they hoped to finish their sorrowful days in an unconstrained profession of their own religion; when, on the night previous to their leaving Rome, Ippolita had appeared in a vision to the Comtesse Marie Arnaudi, being all arrayed in glorious robes and attended by seven cherubim, more beautiful and more bright than the jewels that shine in the diadem of the Lady of Loretto; and while the lady was obliged to veil her eyes, because she could not endure the brilliancy of the vision, Ippolita made her understand that those by whom she was accompanied were the children whom the lady had lost, and whom she had so deeply regretted; making her to understand that she, their nurse, had been admonished by a certain santa to terminate their lives before their parents could have time to lead them into those errors by which they would have been eternally destroyed. "And faith and strength were given to me," she added, "to smother, and to poison, and to inflict various deaths on the very babes whom, a moment be-

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fore, I had pressed to my heart in transports of the warmest love."*

"Smother and poison!" thought Victoria, throwing down the book; "how well does that agree with the words which I heard from Bianca this morning, 'Please the Almighty to take the young one to himself before her parents shall have time to force her back into their own false and abominable way of thinking.' O, if she should think, like Ippolita, that it is her duty to poison me! she might do it so well now, so easily, with the cakes and fine things which she means to send me up by the basket. What can I do—what am I to do? dare I tell mamma? but she will not believe me, and she will be so violent. O papa, papa!" and what with terror, what with hunger (for till now she had been too proud to touch the bread and water which honest Mrs. Evans had brought up), she fell back on the bed half fainting, while strange horrible visions passed before her eyes, and for a short time she knew not where she was, or what she was about.

In the mean time the sun had set, and the twilight, which at Nice is short, and shorter than it otherwise would be from the intervention of the hills in the west, had nearly passed away, when Victoria was roused by a voice under the window, singing part of "O gloriosa Domina."

Victoria started up on hearing this, and walked to the window with trembling steps, hardly daring to look around her, so impressed was her mind with frightful images. "It is Zenone," she thought, "and I must put down the string, or they will suspect me. But I will not touch a morsel of what they have provided; perhaps there may be poison in it."

But Zenone had lifted up her voice again, and Victoria, opening the window, looked out; it was moonlight. Zenone was standing with a basket in her hand, and she directed Victoria to let down the cord. She did so, and Zenone tying the basket to the end of the cord, the little prisoner drew it up and shut the window. She was pleased to find a candle and tinder in the basket; this was really a relief to her, and she immediately struck a light, lighted a candle, and placed it in the shade of a closet-door. She then examined the basket, and

* A story founded on fact.

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found various patisseries, with a few oranges and a bottle of water. The oranges she thought she might venture upon, having carefully examined the rinds to see if they had been broken, and with them and Mrs. Evans's bread she made her supper. Then returning to the window, she watched the rising of the moon, or rather the increasing light of the moon, as it rose above the hills. The base-court was immediately under her window, and as she stood she thought she heard a low knocking at the outer door of the court. Persons who are shut up like Victoria are always interested in any thing which bears the smallest reference to active life. She stood where she was, therefore, and listened; the knocking was repeated, and presently she saw Bianca cross the court, and proceed to the door; she saw her open it, and pass through; the wall of the court, however, hid her person as soon as she was through the door; but Victoria still stood at the window. Just beyond the wall was the carriage-road, and though the hill on that side was precipitous, a part of this road was visible from the window, though perhaps only for twenty or thirty yards, but not farther; after which it dipped so immediately that but as much of it as was visible was without shade, and being stony, was very distinct in the moonlight.

Bianca, however, remained on the other side of the door, it might be half an hour, and then returned stealingly, as it were, and looking up and around her as she stepped into the court; and at the same time Victoria saw a dark figure gliding along that part of the road which I have described as being visible. On close observation, she perceived that this person wore the habit of a priest: she was not mistaken—she could not be mistaken; it was certainly a priest in his long black drapery and peculiar hat; and he had been conversing thus secretly with Bianca, and she, perhaps, had been the subject of their discourse, and who knows what they might have plotted? Perhaps this priest might think it would be doing her a kindness to put an end to her life, in order to prevent her from becoming a heretic. It is but justice to say that this person, whose name I am not at liberty to give, had no such thoughts, although Victoria had been the subject of the conference; but whenever a church affects mystery, and endeavours to impress the minds of men through the influence of fear-

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ful imagery, many dreadful actions will, no doubt, be attributed to it and to its members of which they are not guilty; and whatever in past ages might have been the crimes of the Roman Catholic Church, I can hardly believe that the experience of Marie Arnaudi would be verified in the present age. Nevertheless, this mysterious meeting between Bianca and the priest, in conjunction with the words which had escaped the bigoted old servant in the morning, and the frightful Italian legend, so affected the mind of Victoria, that she ran to her door, tried to force it open, and when that could not be done, she threw herself at the foot of her bed, and was weeping violently when Mrs. Evans opened her door.

"I am come, Miss Victoria," she said, without seeming to observe the candle that was burning behind the closet-door, "to know if you are willing to come down and beg your mamma's pardon."

"Mrs. Evans," said Victoria, "will you take a little note from me to mamma?"

"If it is an humble one, surely I will," she replied.

"Then I will make haste to write it;" and immediately finding the materials, she wrote a little note in French, which I shall translate.

"Dear Mamma,—If you have any love for me, please to forgive me; and do not ask me to read the Bible to you till papa comes home, and then I will give you my reasons. Please to burn this, and don't let anybody see it—I have great reasons. Your unhappy daughter,

"VICTORIA."

This little epistle, which was blistered with the tears of the writer, was carried down by the ambassadress in high glee, supposing it would make all things right.

"What has the little rebel sent you?" said Mrs. Morley.

"Not much to the purpose," said Julia, who was reading the note over her mamma's shoulder; "she wants to refer her petition to the judgment of papa. She knows his partiality, and that he will be sure to blame mamma."

The letter was then read aloud, and commented upon, and then laid upon the table, notwithstanding the entreaties of the poor child that it should be burned; and there

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It lay the next morning when Fabio came to set the room to rights; and as that worthy personage always read every card or note which he found about, it may be easily imagined that this was not lost upon him, and that he made himself the full master of its contents before he threw it into an open china vase which stood on the mantel-piece, and which was the usual repository of unanswered billets, and where there was actually, at this time, one or two more which had been sent to Mr. Rosebury.

But to return to the discussion which took place upon the reading of this note: there were various opinions not worthy of repetition, the result of which was, that as Mrs. Rosebury's nerves had been much harassed that day, Julia should go up and hear what her sister had to say, than which there could not have been a decision more contrary to the apparent interest of Victoria.

"Well, Miss Victoria," said her sister, as she entered her room, "I am come up by mamma's desire to know why you do not choose to read your Bible to her. As to seeking to be forgiven before you consent to do what your mamma bids you, I really wonder you can think of such a thing."

"Will mamma permit me a moment's conversation alone with her?" replied Victoria. "Do ask her to allow me that favour."

"What, that you may talk her over as you do papa," replied Julia, "and make her ill as you did him? I shall carry no such message, sister. In one word, will you come down and read the chapter, or will you not? Where can the hardship be of reading a chapter in the Bible?"

Victoria turned from her sister in reply to this, with an air which was interpreted by the latter into insolence, but which was in fact a feeling of recklessness; for at that instant it seemed to the poor child that her last hope was gone, since her mother declined to allow her an audience even for one little moment; and accordingly she walked again to the window, which Julia taking for a signal that the conference was closed, left the room, turning the key on her young sister with a nonchalance which, even with her imperfect view of the subject, was not much to her credit.

And now poor Victoria, being left to her own feelings and apprehensions, than which she could hardly have

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had more unpleasant companions, considered herself as abandoned for the night. She therefore lighted a fresh candle, and set it in the chimney, and having drunk the last drop of the water brought by Mrs. Evans, laid herself undressed on the bed. She could give no account afterward of what she felt, for her mind had become confused with terror. Nevertheless she fell asleep, and slept for some hours, though not without the disturbance of very uneasy dreams. At length, it might be, by her own account, about midnight, she awoke, and thought she saw some one hovering over her bed. As she looked at the figure, it seemed to recede to the farthest end of the room. Victoria followed it with her eyes, and it seemed to settle, as it were, into a drapery of the curtain; again changing its form, and approaching as she drew her eyes from it. The poor child would gladly have covered her eyes and tried to sleep again; but she perceived that the candle was going out, and at the same time she was tormented with a burning thirst; she therefore made an effort, got up, lighted another candle, and going to the glass brought by Mrs. Evans, ascertained to her sorrow that there was not a drop of water left in it. She then recollected the bottle sent in the basket; she deliberated a minute whether she should drink the suspected liquor at all risks, but thirst prevailing, she yielded to the temptation, and drank more than half of it. She then returned to her bed, and soon slept again, but awoke about three with a violent sense of heat and sickness. She immediately recollected the water she had drunk, and had no doubt that she was actually poisoned. She was indeed very ill, but the water was harmless: however, she was so overcome with horrible apprehension, that she began to scream, and her cries presently brought several servants to the door. Some ran for the key from Mrs. Evans, who slept within her lady's room, so that the whole house was presently alarmed; and when they gathered round the bed of the poor child, they found her seriously ill, and in such a state that she could not distinguish realities from the horrible imaginations of her own mind.

She was sitting up in her bed, and the wildness of her eye was alarming in the highest degree. It was then, for the first time perhaps, that Mrs. Rosebury experienced any feeling towards her child which a mother ought to experience. She felt that she ought to have

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seen her alone before she went to bed, Julia having, though by no means kindly, informed her of her sister's petition. She remembered, too, many things which her husband had said to her respecting this child, and especially his last request, that she would avoid a quarrel with her during his absence, and she trembled at the result of this quarrel. "If any thing should happen to this child," she thought, "he will never forgive me. I shall never be able to bear his just resentment." And under these feelings, she sent immediately for a physician, and supposing it would be agreeable to her child, directed Bianca and Zenone to establish themselves as her nurses.

In the mean time, she addressed her many times in the tenderest accents she could use, calling her her love, her darling, her little Victoria: to all of which the child was perfectly heedless, but looking steadfastly at Bianca, kept crying out, "No, no, not yet! not yet! I have not—indeed I have not!—not since I knew it was wrong! I have not read it!—take away the book!"

"Let me speak to her ma'am," said Bianca, seeing Mrs. Rosebury very much distressed; and the old woman, stooping down to her, whispered something in her ear, which, whatever it might be, silenced her; but we have no means of knowing the import of this whisper, since Victoria could never give any account of it. "And now," said Bianca, "lie back, and let me put you in order for the doctor to see you;" and, with the assistance of Zenone, she arranged her head, and settled her in a becoming manner for the reception of the physician. He was an Englishman, a Protestant, and very skilful; but in Victoria's case he lay under much disadvantage, inasmuch as it was impossible for him to conjecture the causes of her illness, which were various, not only arising from distress of mind, but from a violent cold, occasioned by having been suddenly taken from the warm study in which she had spent the last week into the midnight air. However, he immediately ascertained that she was the subject of a fever which was making a rapid progress. He did not, however, think it right to alarm Mrs. Rosebury more than he thought necessary in order to induce her to pay proper attention to his patient, for his general experience had taught him that mothers are very susceptible of terror; and having done what appeared necessary,

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he took his leave. Mrs. Rosebury remained with her daughter till she fell asleep, and then retired for a few hours, leaving the little sufferer with Bianca.

In the morning, as Victoria appeared better, a family council was again called, the subject being whether Mr. Rosebury should be sent for; and after many arguments brought forward on both sides, it was settled that as he was expected the next day, no express messenger should be sent to him unless the child were worse.

But the fever did not appear to make the expected progress this day, and the child seemed to be more quiet. Mrs. Rosebury could not ascertain whether the physician quite liked this excessive quiet; but as he spoke cautiously, she chose to interpret his words according to her own wishes. She never, however, asked him whether Mr. Rosebury should be sent for, although he said, more than once, that he wished the father of the patient had happened to be at home.

Thus passed this first day of Victoria's illness, and the second of her father's absence, during which period she was never left by Bianca. In the evening a letter came from Mr. Rosebury, saying that he hoped to be at home the next night. Victoria was evidently worse the next day, and the mother was more and more miserable. She dreaded to see her husband, yet she almost wished it over; but at night, instead of seeing him, another letter came, saying that Lord M. being much better, they were all coming on together the next morning.

Mrs. Rosebury watched Victoria herself during the greater part of that night, hoping in vain to see some change for the better; and it may be more easily imagined than described what the feelings of this lady were, when, about one o'clock the next day, she saw from the window the carriage which brought her husband.

She immediately ran down, to be the first to tell the story of the poor child's illness, and to tell it in her own way; but he was in the saloon before she reached it, the family being all assembled there with the exception of Mr. Morley, who had staid to settle Lord M—— at the hotel.

Mr. Rosebury, having kissed his wife and Julia, immediately called for his little girl, and while so doing took up the notes which were in the china jar, and still held

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them as quite secondary things, while his wife broke to him the account of Victoria's illness, of which she made rather too light an affair. He coloured very highly as she spoke, for when he missed the child he had been more than half afraid that he should hear something unpleasant, in consequence of which he looked round on the circle more angrily than he was accustomed to do, saying, "I hope there have been no quarrels; but I must see her," he added. "Where is she?"

"In her room," said Mrs. Rosebury, hesitating, "in her bed. You must be prepared—"

"In her room in bed!" he repeated. "Is she very ill? Speak. In one word, is my child very ill?" and he rushed to the door.

"Stop, stop," cried Mrs. Rosebury, "let me go first."

"I thought it would be so," exclaimed Mr. Rosebury; "I had my apprehensions of what has happened. But don't hinder me; I will see her," and he brushed by his wife, and ran up to the apartment.

He was absent only a few minutes, and when he came back his face was as pale as a sheet of white paper. His relations had never seen him thus moved before. He had in this short space not only seen his altered child, but his eyes had fallen on her handwriting among the notes he held in his hand. He had thrown all the rest away to read this, and with this open in his hand he appeared again before his wife.

"Mrs. Rosebury," he said, "what does this mean? You have finished your work in cruelty, as you began it with stony indifference. Explain to me this instant all that has passed; tell me how you have reduced your unhappy little daughter to the miserable state in which I find her."

This was not the sort of language which Mrs. Rosebury was accustomed to hear from her husband; and faulty as she felt her conduct to have been towards her child, it was not the sort of language she chose to bear. She therefore attempted to throw the blame off herself with a high hand, which served only to make her husband more exasperated.

"Had you not known how the poor child was involved with these artful papists, I should not have blamed you, Mrs. Rosebury," he said; "but knowing that, as you did, you were inexcusable in driving her to extremities."

Julia attempted to speak in this place for her mother,

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but her father silenced her, saying, that if she at least had had any pity for her sister, things might not perhaps have been as they now were.

We are not defending Mr. Rosebury in all this—we are merely stating things as they happened; but we should find it very difficult to describe the scene which followed, when, having delivered himself as above related, he left the room, and hastened to the bedside of his little girl, where he took his station, with a resolution to remain until she no longer needed his attention.

There was a silence in the saloon for some moments after he was gone, the ladies looking at each other in mute amazement. At length old Mrs. Morley spoke, and said every thing which she ought not to say. She began by abusing Mr. Rosebury, and inflaming the anger of her daughter. She told Julia that her father was so wrapped up in her sister that he had no affection whatever to bestow on her; and she concluded by saying, that if she were in her daughter's place, she would have a separate allowance and a separate establishment before she would submit to the humours of such a husband and such children, who would, if they were to go on as they had done the last few weeks, reduce her life to that of a nun.

To all this, as no one answered, she added, addressing Mrs. Rosebury, "To tell you the truth, Maria, I have had it in my mind for some days past to proceed to Rome with my friend Lady M——, and to take my younger daughter with me; and what can you do better than to accompany me with Julia, and let this man know that he is not to subject you in this way to all his humours, and to the tyranny of his little favourite, and the reproofs of your son George? When the young man comes, he will be sure to side with his father, and what a life you will have."

"Indeed, indeed I shall," said Mrs. Rosebury, bursting into tears, and she sat down on the nearest chair and sobbed violently. At this instant Mrs. Evans came in, with an agitated and distressed look, saying that she came from Mr. Rosebury, who wished to see his lady.

"Enough, Evans—enough; wait at the door," said Mrs. Morley. "And now, my dear," she added, "now is your time, either to give way or assert your independence. Shall I tell Evans to say that you are hastening to her master, to beg his pardon, and kiss his hand,

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and before your daughter, too, for he is no doubt in Victoria's room!"

"I am a miserable woman every way," said Mrs. Rosebury. "Send what answer you will, mother, I am too ill to attend him;" and she hastened to her own room, her daughter and sisters following, and there had a violent hysteric fit, while Mrs. Morley putting her head out of the door of the gallery, "Tell my son-in-law, Evans," she said, "that my daughter is too ill to attend him; she is now actually in a fainting fit."

But to finish this unpleasant part of my story as shortly as possible, I shall simply say that Mrs. Rosebury, in order to make good her mother's words, either was or thought herself so ill after her hysteric fit that she actually went to bed, and desired that the physician might see her when next he came to Victoria; and when Mr. Morley arrived, he was told that his sister and niece were both ill, and in different apartments.

But to do Mrs. Rosebury justice, I must inform my reader, that although she had resolved not to be the first to apologize, she was truly miserable. A thousand times did she wish that she had gone to her husband when summoned by Evans, and too painfully did she feel that what would have been easy then would be almost intolerable after the delay of some hours. It was in vain that her mother talked to her, and endeavoured to prove to her how harshly and unjustly she had been treated. There was a still small voice within, which continually whispered that she had been wrong in her treatment of Victoria, knowing as she did how, through her neglect, the child had been brought under the influence of Roman Catholics. She was shocked to think how she had received the advances she had made in her note, and she was also led to see that as she had never deserved her affection as a mother, she had no right to use that correction which a tender parent only ought to use. Thus one reflection seemed to introduce another, till at length the inquiry was suggested, may we not hope divinely, "Are my husband and George right in pleading the importance of that religion which I have so long and so entirely neglected, and am I wrong? What will George think, when he comes and finds the house thus divided? I shall be ashamed to meet my son, but I cannot confess myself to blame. No, I must bear it out; my husband will come

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round. This is not the first occasion, if it happens now, that I have made him confess himself wrong when the fault has been mine. And what is the use of my thinking of religion now? Indeed I cannot; I should die of the vapours to think of these things. Death must come, to be sure, and I must stand before the judgment-seat; the Lord have mercy on me then! If I dare not stand before a justly offended husband, how shall I stand before Him who knows all my thoughts?" And she sat up in her bed, and tried to shake off these reflections, for she had been left alone, her mother and sister having gone out of the room to see Mr. Morley, who had just come; but her efforts were vain—they would return. Though she became easier when one and another of her relations sat with her, she was still invaded with terrors, which, however, she dared not to reveal; and if these were such in the day-time, it may be imagined what they were in the silence of the night. Thus the mind of this poor woman was like a troubled sea, which casts up mire and dirt, her proud and stubborn nature rising in opposition against strong convictions of sin, the one becoming more determined as the other gained force; while the reports which from time to time were brought of the sufferings of Victoria, for she would know how the child went on, seemed to add to her anguish, so that her situation was truly deplorable, and her illness, which at first was only imaginary, soon became real.

In the mean time, though at first Mr. Rosebury seemed much hurt by the answer which Mrs. Evans brought to his message, yet it appeared that he soon dismissed it from his mind, and became entirely absorbed by the condition of Victoria. He was extremely pained at first to see that she did not know him, and appeared not to take any notice whatever of him. He was however startled, after having been some time in the room, Bianca being seated at the foot of her bed, to observe, on Bianca's getting up to fetch something, that she turned suddenly to him, and smiled, recovering her appearance of insensibility on the return of the servant. He however seemed to take no notice of this; but after the physician had paid his evening visit, he took upon himself to dismiss Bianca and Zenone for the night, saying that he and Mrs. Evans would sit up with her, that worthy woman having offered her services. Bianca opposed

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this measure as long as she decently could, but Mr. Rosebury insisting that she and her niece should get a night's rest, she was obliged to submit.

Mr. Rosebury could hardly tell whether Victoria was aware that they were out of the room, but at length, having been in a short disturbed sleep for a quarter of an hour, she opened her eyes, and asked for water. Bianca had always been accustomed to give her what she drank, but on her papa raising her to take it, while Mrs. Evans held it, she said, "Is not Bianca here?"

"No, my love," replied Mr. Rosebury.

"Nor Zenone, papa?" asked the little girl.

"No, my love."

"Bolt the door, then," said Victoria. She had not spoken so much since her papa had returned.

"They are gone to bed," said Mr. Rosebury.

"I am glad of it," she said. "And now, papa, will Bianca know what I say in the morning when you are gone?"

Mr. Rosebury looked at Mrs. Evans, but neither of them spoke. They were afraid to excite the feelings of the little girl, but they were astonished to see how easy she almost instantly became, when fully satisfied of the person with whom she was.

"Papa shall hold my hand," she said, "and Mrs. Evans shall sit at my feet. Then I shall be safe, shall I not, papa? But will you go away to-morrow?" and she looked anxiously at him.

He gave her every assurance that he would not leave her, and she grew easy again; and Mr. Rosebury observed, that as the night wore away the child gradually became more tranquil, the anxiety of her countenance disappeared, and she said more than once, "Papa is the best nurse after all."

About five o'clock she fell asleep, and slept long, during which time Bianca appeared again, but Mr. Rosebury, according to his promise, took care that she should not be left alone with her, but that either he or Mrs. Evans should be also present. It was about six o'clock this morning that Mr. Rosebury, having left his little daughter asleep, withdrew to his study to refresh himself, by changing his dress; which having done, he knelt down to pray most earnestly that the various afflictions of his family might terminate in their good, and that he might

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be directed so to act towards his wife as might promote rather than retard the workings and leadings of a kind Providence.

While thus engaged, the physician, who had been up with Victoria, knocked at his door, and coming smilingly forward, said, "Mr. Rosebury, I am happy to say that your little girl is better. She spoke to me, and said that you had been her nurse last night, adding, "Papa is the best nurse.' Only go on, my good sir, as you have begun," continued the worthy man, as he hurried away, "and we shall do vastly well."

As Mr. Rosebury followed the physician to the hall-door, the latter was met in the portico by a young gentleman in a travelling-dress, followed by sundry porters carrying trunks, &c.

"George!" exclaimed Mr. Rosebury, "impossible!"

"Very possible," answered the young man, springing into his father's arms, "your own George; and how are my mother and sisters, and all of them?" And he was springing up the well-known stairs, when his father said, "Not up yet, my boy, it is hardly seven o'clock; but come into my study, where I have ordered an early breakfast. I will presently tell you wherefore; but have you been up all night?"

"I believe so," replied George; "but I have forgotten all about my journey. Tell me how they are."

Mr. Rosebury had a painful tale to tell his son; it is certain that he softened it as much as possible, and he was able to do it, as he had just heard the physician's opinion of Victoria. Nor did he say one word of his disagreement with his wife, hoping that all would be set right before his son could hear of it. But this story, together with George's comments, occupied the whole time of their breakfast, and Mr. Rosebury was rejoiced to find that his son looked on these things in a different point of view with himself.

"My dear father," he said, "I would much rather hear that you are all angry and vexed with each other on the score of religion, than to find you all in a dead sleep. I am prepared for a few battles and I trust I know wherein my strength must lie; and I must confess that I did not expect to find in my dear father one so ready to stand upon my side. But why do I say my side? It is the side of the Lord, and we shall be conquerors."

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While the fine young man was speaking to this effect, the heart of the father was in a glow of gratitude towards his heavenly Parent, who had given him such a son; for George was another Victoria, all sparkling, beautiful, and affectionate—these fine natural qualities being sanctified in him, whereas in the little girl they were spoiled and perverted. If Mr. Rosebury, therefore, loved his little daughter, notwithstanding the perverseness of her temper, how much more was his heart drawn out towards his son, in whom the sweetest Christian tempers beamed forth through all the vivacity and ardour of his natural temperament! Yet the presence of his boy did not make him forget his little girl. Being apprized that she was awake, and called for him, he dismissed his son to join the rest of the family, and hastened to his little girl, with whom we will leave him for the present; for we are not like the dramatist, who, when his piece is coming to a close, hardly knows to what to give his attention, his plot thickening around him, and every scene requiring his peculiar regard.

It seems that Mr. Morley had seen his sister the night before, had heard her complaints of her husband, and his mother's plans for taking her and Julia with them to Rome, and, to the surprise of the ladies, had taken the part directly against them. Old bachelors, in general, have a very high notion of the authority of a husband, and the obedience due by a wife. In consequence of which, he had told his sister that she was making herself very miserable for nothing at all, unless it might be the illness of her child, and that the best thing she could do would be to get up, slip on her clothes, and go up and beg pardon like a dutiful wife. "And this being done, you will have nothing to do but wipe your eyes, eat a bit of sugared bread and butter, and go to bed again in peace with all mankind."

Now it happened that the light manner in which Mr. Morley treated the affair was the most provoking thing which he could have done on this occasion; and Mrs. Rosebury in consequence resolved that her brother should see that the affair was not so unimportant as he thought it; and therefore, though contrary to her conscience, which, as I before remarked, was not asleep, she resolved that she would not make a single advance of which her husband might avail himself to bring about a reconciliation. In the mean time, the rest of the

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ladies were offended with Mr. Morley, and the worthy mother, being just come out of her room, was renewing the attack upon him, when George, whose arrival had not been reported, burst in upon them, and gave a new turn to everybody's thoughts. All the relations were delighted with him, and most agreeably disappointed; for, as the uncle afterward said, "We had expected a sort of crop-eared puritan in this boy, and instead of such a one, we see as fine and as cheerful a youth as any ever turned out of our own fair island."

"But my mother!" said George; and this exclamation sent Julia to her mother's room, to carry the news that George was come. In a few minutes, Julia returned to introduce her brother; and a very long interview then ensued, in which, from one thing to another, the mother was led to open her whole heart to her son. She commenced her history, which was full of complaints, with some mildness of manner, but became violent as she proceeded, and wept much towards the close of it.

George sat by her bed, with his eyes fixed on the ground and full of thought, but he made no remarks on any particular parts of her discourse, although he spoke and said, "You must be aware, madam, that it is hard for a son to speak."

"I know it," she replied; "but when I opened my heart to you, I gave you authority to speak to me. For a moment, let us forget our relative situations; speak to me as you would to a stranger."

"Dear madam," said the young man, stooping and kissing her hand, which lay on the quilt, "how can I forget that you are my own beloved mother!"

Mrs. Rosebury was affected by this; she embraced her son, and wept again; but her tears were now as the kindly dew which descends on the mown grass.

George was encouraged by his mother's manner, and said, "The evils of which you speak, dear madam, as existing in this household, proceed from the total neglect of religion which has, I fear, prevailed in it."

The lady made no answer, and George went on. "Had not the Almighty had purposes of mercy for us, he would have permitted us to go on in the deep sleep in which we all lay, until we had passed from time into eternity; but he has stirred us up—he has awakened us, and made us uneasy. He has said to us, 'Arise, and fly from the wrath to come!'"

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Mrs. Rosebury spoke in this place, in order to defend herself against the charge of total neglect of religion, laying the blame on the want of a place for public worship, and shifting it at the same time from her own shoulders.

Her son allowed her to say all she chose; and, in fact, to discover how very little she had to say, which she would not so well have done had he interrupted her; and when she had concluded, which she did rather abruptly, being come sooner than she expected to the end of her account of duties performed, he replied, "But, mother, granting that these forms have been attended to, every heathen and Roman Catholic could boast of many more,—forms can admit an individual only into the visible church; a spiritual worship is required of those who are members of the invisible church."

Mrs. Rosebury did not at first comprehend this distinction; on which her son said, in plainer language, "It is one thing, dear mother, to belong to the church of God, and another to belong to any particular form of worship or church on earth. A person may bear a very fair character in his own particular church on earth, and yet be excluded for ever from the general assembly of the church of the first-born in heaven."

Here the young man was coming to the point; and here he pressed his mother closely on the subject of faith, having first pointed out to her that no person, however apparently correct in the sight of his fellow-men, can be justified by works in the eyes of the Discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

"Do you believe what God has said in his holy book, my dear mother?" asked George.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Rosebury, "I know that the Bible is true. I am not an infidel."

"Can you receive every word written in the Bible?" said George.

"To tell you the truth," replied Mrs. Rosebury, "I do not doubt the Scriptures, but I do not know them—I am ashamed to say so. I must acknowledge that I have neglected to read them for some years, and you know that we have had no place of worship to go to."

George might have said, "Then what becomes of your boastings?" But he refrained from reproaches; he could not forget that the lady before him was his mother. He however answered, "If you have not

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studied the Bible lately, you are not aware of the means provided by the Almighty for the salvation of man."

"No," replied Mrs. Rosebury, "I am not so ignorant as you suppose. We are to do right, and to serve God, and Christ will help us if we fall short. And Christ, I trust, will help me; and that I shall be pardoned for my short comings."

"This is not the gospel," replied George, seriously. "Dear mother, permit me to say, that if you have no other dependence than this, you are in a state of condemnation."

Mrs. Rosebury grew angry and hot at this assertion of her son, and said, "Really, George, I do not understand you. If this is not the Christian religion, what is it?"

"The Christian religion," replied George, "is so very simple, that no person who is not wholly divested of human confidence can receive it. It merely consists in the knowledge of Christ our Lord as the Saviour."

"Well," returned Mrs. Rosebury, "and did I not just now say that I looked to Christ for mercy? And you, in reply, told me that that was not the truth."

"Looking to Christ our Lord as a helper out to our short comings, and as one who will show mercy if we fail at the last, is not the same, by any means, as knowing him as the Saviour, and our Saviour. Understand, dear mother, the extent of the word Saviour—is it no more than helper, than assistant?"

Mrs. Rosebury thought awhile, and then said, "The word Saviour, taken in its most comprehensive meaning, is a word of mighty signification."

"Well, then, beloved mother," said the son, "pray that you may be brought to know Christ our Lord in the strongest sense of the term; pray that he may be revealed to you, especially as your Redeemer and Sanctifier, through the Lord the Spirit, and when this is done all else will follow; peace will be restored to your mind, and you will be able to forgive those who have trespassed against you as God has forgiven you, and we shall then be a blessed family. The present world will lose its interest, and our hearts will be there where our treasure is; for he that spared not his own Son, but gave him for the sins of the world, how shall he not with him give us all things?"

Several impatient motions on the part of Mrs. Rose-

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bury, at this time, reminded George that he had perchance said as much as his mother would bear at once; he therefore added that he had been very fortunate in his journey, having met at Lyons, to which place he had come in the diligence, an English gentleman, an elderly clergyman, with whom he had joined company for the remainder of his travels. "Mr. Reynolds," he added, "is now in Nice, where he expects to remain only a few weeks; and as he is an experienced Christian, you might, perhaps, like to converse with him rather than with one so young as I am."

To this Mrs. Rosebury made no answer, and George took his leave of her for the present. As he came out of her room he met Julia, whom he invited to walk with him in the garden, where he had another long conversation, which was far less pleasing to him than that he had had with his mother. This young person was at this time wholly devoted to pleasure, and she had, in consequence, a horror of the very name of religion; neither would she hear a word on the subject from her brother, and really seemed to be extremely angry with him for having brought it forward in his letter to his father. But as what she said is not worth repeating, I shall take the liberty of omitting it altogether. There were more conferences during that day between George and his other relations; he was not, however, permitted to see Victoria, nor was she even told that he was come, for she was inclined to sleep most part of the day; and as her pulse had become more regular, and every other symptom as it should be, the physician said that if she were not roused or disturbed, she would sleep herself well, he trusted.

Mr. Rosebury kept guard over her, being relieved by Mrs. Evans, whom the grandmother kindly gave up to the service. The mother remained in her own room, though not in her bed. Julia continued to be sullen. Mr. Morley had much to say to his nephew, though he told him in a few words that he would hear no cant. Thus the day passed off, and the evening was terminated by a second visit of George to his mother; but as the old lady accompanied him in this visit, there was no particular conversation upon religion, Mrs. Rosebury waiving the subject whenever George attempted to introduce it.

Before George went to bed, he saw his father again

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for a few minutes. Mr. Rosebury had got some sleep during the day, on a couch which he had caused to be set in Victoria's room, and where he proposed to lie down during the night, if all were well; "for," added he, "I am resolved to keep close guard over the dear child, Mrs. Evans having informed me that a priest was seen by her, towards the dusk of the evening, in conference with Bianca, at the door of the court. Your little sister, I plainly see," continued the father, "is involved in their web, how deeply I cannot say; but I apprehend that it will be impossible for us to remain here with her; we must guard her carefully till she is well, and then remove from this place."

George agreed with his father in this opinion, and then reported to him much of the conversation he had had with his mother, asking his father if he could not take some little step to terminate this unpleasant state of irritation.

"My dear George," replied Mr. Rosebury, "it is a painful thing to make a son the umpire between angry parents, but I consider this crisis so important that I feel that much of our future happiness, humanly speaking, is to depend upon it. I can give no account of the change which has taken place in my own mind within a few weeks. I had begun, before Victoria's illness, and even before I suspected how, through our neglect, she was involved with the Roman Catholics, to be very much dissatisfied with our way of life, and the state of your mother and Julia; and your letter, together with my distress respecting Victoria, has, I trust, under the Divine blessing, tended still farther to open my eyes. It is my fixed purpose, God helping me, to make an entire change in the habits of our family; this reform will probably separate us from Mrs. Morley and your uncle and aunts, and it remains to be ascertained whether your mother will submit to it. It will be a dreadful blow to me if she does not, but I think I know her disposition, and I feel that if I now give way farther than I have done, my influence will be weakened, and we shall lose our object."

"I understand you, sir," said George.

"And you may also understand," added Mr. Rosebury, "that I am ready, on the smallest concession on your mother's part, to pass all over, and to be to her what, I trust, I have always been—I mean in respect of

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kindness. But I must not allow of that in my family which late convictions have made me see to be extremely sinful."

"I have not another word to say, sir," replied George; "I am satisfied, and it must be my endeavour, with the Divine assistance, to bring my dear mother to a proper way of thinking."

"But, George," said Mr. Rosebury, "it appears to me, from your report of your conversation with your mother on the subject of religion, that you are feeding her with what I should call very strong meat."

The young man asked his father to explain what he meant.

"I consider your mother," replied Mr. Rosebury, "as being even more ignorant of religion than I am myself, or rather, perhaps, than as I was before your letter came, and God knows that need not be. But allowing that it is so, which you will hardly, I think, dispute—why at once strike with her to the deepest doctrines of religion—doctrines which, I confess, I can hardly myself receive?"

"What are these, sir?" asked George.

"I am not skilled, as yet, in the language of religion," replied Mr. Rosebury; "but the deep doctrine to which I allude is this, viz. that when an individual has been brought to know that Christ is his Saviour, every thing else will assuredly follow; by which I understand you to assert that this knowledge is sufficient, and that the man who has it will be certainly saved."

"Is saved," replied George, "already saved; and, being saved, is as assured of eternal blessedness as if he were already in the realms of glory."

"Indeed, George," said Mr. Rosebury, "I must confess that this is beyond me. What, then, if a man, living in allowed sin, acknowledges Christ as his Saviour, he is as sure of salvation as the blessed Stephen, who, 'being not in the flesh, saw the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right-hand of God.' (Acts vii. 56.) Is it not written (Matt. vii. 21), 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.'"

"My dear sir," replied George, "you do not understand me. I did not assert that he who with the lips acknowledges Christ to be the Son of God and the

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Saviour of his people (for such is the language in common use in Christian countries—a sort of Shibboleth, which, if a man does not utter, he is scouted from the society of even nominal Christians), is actually saved, and can in consequence never fall away. But I assert that he who believes, in deed and in truth, that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God, and whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

"You confuse me, George," said Mr. Rosebury; "you perplex me, I confess. According to you, we are first to believe that we are saved through Christ, and then to look for our victory over the world, by which I suppose that I am right in understanding that subjugation of the passions, and proper direction of the affections, included under the term of amendment of life."

"I mean sanctification in general," replied George, "which of course includes an entire change of life; and I mean to assert, that sanctification will certainly follow faith. We are taught by Scripture that the three persons of the Divinity are all equally engaged in the salvation of an individual,—the Father commencing, the Son carrying on, and the Holy Ghost completing the work."

"These things are entirely new to me, my son," replied Mr. Rosebury, "and thoroughly overturn all my preconceived ideas, which were these,—that the individual is first prepared and made fit by the Spirit, through repentance and a change of life, to be an object of salvation; and being thus purified, is presented by the Son to the Father, by whom he is accepted through the mercy obtained by the Son. I do not know whether I make myself clear, or whether ideas, which I now perceive to be all confusion, can be rendered more distinct; but so far you will understand, that your system completely overturns mine, my work beginning where yours concludes."

"In consequence of which," replied George, "if I am right, that is, if my principles accord with Scripture, and yours do not, you must observe how very much opposed yours are to the truth, and how very greatly they must retard the progress of that truth, inasmuch as you look for the crowning work before the foundation stone is laid; and not seeing that crowning work in progress, you are driven to hopelessness, and, hu-

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manly speaking, are in a lost condition. Your system, too, is awfully false in one particular—that it contains a blasphemous view of the character of the Father, and instead of making him, as it were, the first mover in the work of mercy, it seems, according to you, almost as if the salvation of the individual were forced upon him by the intervention of the second and third persons of the blessed Trinity."

"I see it," replied Mr. Rosebury, "and I acknowledge that this is the view I have had of the Father, even since something like light has broken in on my soul, for which offence I am ready to cry, 'Father, forgive me; I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.' But, my dear, blessed boy, state to me the particular works of the three Persons in man's salvation, as you have been enabled to understand them from Scripture."

"The work of the Father is first in order," said George, "and may be explained in a few verses; first, from St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (i. 3, 4, 5), 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to his will.' Thus, my dear father, you see," said George, "that we who are to be saved were predestinated to glory before the foundation of the world, through the tender love of the Father; and we further find from Scripture that the Son is revealed to the soul of the redeemed by the Father, for, as our blessed Saviour said to Peter, when he had answered and said, 'Thou art Christ, the son of the living God,'—'Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.' And again, such are the mercies of the Father to his redeemed," continued George, "and as those who are predestinated to glory are chosen by the Father, and by him brought to the knowledge of the Son, so are they justified by the Son, and regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit, who makes his abode in the believer, the work of the Spirit following as certainly those of the Father and of the Son, as

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the Word of God is true; and they that doubt it are not believers, and make the Holy One a liar."

"But is it not possible, George," said Mr. Rosebury, "that a soul may believe that Christ our Lord is the Saviour, without feeling at the same time that he is its Saviour? For example, may I not believe all that you have said, and yet have some doubts respecting my own particular case? I may believe that Christ is the Saviour prepared for certain persons who are chosen by the Father, and that such are justified, and will be certainly regenerated and sanctified, without believing that I am myself one of this blessed number."

"Let us examine the Scriptures in this difficulty, sir," replied George; "you are supposing the case of a person who believes that Christ is the Saviour, but having always been accustomed to look to his own demerits, doubts whether he is *his* Saviour. What reply does the Scripture make to such an inquirer? 'The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.'" (Rom. x. 8, 9.)

"My dear son," said Mr. Rosebury, "you have given me much to think of this night. Bless you, my child! pray for me, for your mother, for us all, and God be with you."

"Rather let us implore the intercession of the Son and Holy Spirit," replied George, "than that of one of our fellow-creatures." And having begged his father to forgive him, if he had in any way failed in respect to him, he withdrew to rest, being greatly fatigued.

It is very usual after many disturbed nights for persons to wake early, and not to be able to compose themselves again. This was the case with George. It was scarcely sunrise when he opened his eyes the next morning, and found it impossible to sleep again. He accordingly arose, and, as the house was still, thought he would walk out to visit some of his ancient haunts. He first went round the garden, and through the orange plantations, which were still wet with dew. In the course of his perambulations, he came to the back of the house, where, to his surprise, he saw a dark figure standing in the shade of the door of the yard, as if in

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conference with some one within. He stood a moment, during which the conference broke up. The door was shut, and the figure stood revealed in open day: it was that of a comely-looking elderly man, dressed very much like a clergyman of the Church of England of the higher orders. His hair was gray, and his hat turned up at three corners; but his drapery was longer and more full than that usually worn by our clergy, and he had a silk scarf over his shoulders.

George's indignation rose at the sight. "This is the man," he thought, "who is troubling our house, and who has perhaps endangered the life of my sister." And without waiting to implore the Divine direction, he hastened to meet him, being strong in his own supposed strength; and having accosted him with a slight bow, "Will you permit me, sir," he said, "to inquire what business you may have at this house, which belongs to my father?"

The priest, for such he was, bowed more politely indeed than George had done, and was passing on, when the young man stepping before him, said, "You must allow me to state, that I feel, as do all my family, very uneasy respecting the situation of my little sister. I need not, I presume, inform you, that she now lies very ill, and that her illness is attributed to uneasiness of mind."

"I am sorry for it, sir," said the priest; "but I am not aware in what way I am concerned in this affair, any further than as every human creature ought to feel for another in a state of suffering."

"Do you pretend ignorance, sir?" said George. "Is it possible that you should not be aware of the various distresses to which you give rise in a family by sowing dissension among its members, and influencing, as you have done, the mind of one individual against the principles of another."

"I will not pretend to misunderstand you, sir," replied the priest; "but, granting your charge to be true, I ask you, did not our master say (Mat. x. 34—36), 'Think not that I am come to send peace on earth—I come not to send peace, but a sword; I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.'"

"But, sir," said the brother, "this child is too young

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to judge of sound argument; and by your imposing forms you have influenced her weak mind through the means of terror."

The priest, who was of the society of Jesus, replied to this in the words of St. Paul, "'A dispensation of the gospel is committed to me' (1 Cor. ix. 17), and wo unto me if I obey it not."

"But, sir," replied George, "am I not allowed the same privilege as yourself? I am myself intended for the church—I have already taken the necessary degrees—and why am I not as fit, being her brother, to argue with the child from the Word of God, as another who is a stranger. But you forbid her the book—you do not allow your people to read the Bible."

The priest replied with much graciousness of manner, "Pardon me, my dear young friend, you have imbibed the prejudices of your nation. This is one of the misconceived notions which Protestants are continually bringing forward. But excuse me, my dear sir, when I assure you that it is utterly without foundation. We do allow the Holy Scriptures to be read, but certainly not indiscriminately; a child, or an ignorant person, cannot be expected to understand the mysteries of revelation. St. Paul himself says, that milk is for babes, and meat only for those of full growth; from which we understand that there are some doctrines which are not to be exhibited before every description of persons. St. Peter also is very strong on this subject; for he says, that some parts of the writings of St. Paul are wrested to the destruction of the ignorant. We do allow the Bible to be read; but permission must first be sought by the individual desiring to study for himself, and this privilege is never denied to persons who are thought capable of benefiting by it. At the same time, you, my good sir, cannot deny that the Holy Scriptures contain many mysteries, and that these mysteries can only be explained by the church, with which Christ has promised to be even unto the end of the world."

"But, sir," said George, "I am myself going into the church, as I before informed you, and our church, viz. the established Church of England, claims the same privilege as yours, viz. that Christ is with it."

The priest replied, "You, my young friend, have been educated in a form which is different from ours. I must therefore, in indulgence to the prejudices in which you

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have been ignorantly nurtured, refrain from saying what I would have said, had I been brought into parley with one of the first schismatics. I cannot but allow something for your prejudices, and endeavour to explain to you, in all mildness and charity, the deplorable state of ignorance in which you are. You have been educated for what you call a church, and although I would spare your feelings, yet I cannot disguise the truth. Yours, my dear sir, is no church; for the Scripture teaches us that there is one only true church on earth; that is, one only which has received its authority in a direct line from the apostles, and that is the Church of Rome, which alone, of all churches on earth, traces its descent from the apostles themselves in one unbroken line to this day. But as it regards your church, I ask you whence you received your authority? I will drop the shameful history of your King Henry, and your Queen Anne, and I will not insist upon what your church asserts of the disgraceful ordination of your bishops; but I will simply lay before you this truth, which I think you cannot controvert; Christ has promised to be with his church even to the end of the world—has he not?"

"Undoubtedly sir," replied George, "but—"

The priest interrupted him as he was proceeding, saying, "Excuse me, my dear sir, we must not go on too fast. You have agreed that Christ made this promise, viz. that he would always be with his church to the end of the world; and now permit me to suggest another inquiry, which is this; if Christ did actually make this promise, with what view was it made, but that by his presence he might defend, guide, and enlighten his church?"

"Undoubtedly," replied George; "but, as I was going to say--"

"My young friend," said the priest, again interrupting him, "excuse me, I shall have great pleasure in hearing all your exceptions by-and-by; but allow me first to explain certain simple facts. You have allowed that Christ has promised to be always with his church, and you have admitted that his object in so doing is, that he may defend, guide, and enlighten it; and now I proceed to put this question,—When your king, for his own private reasons, as I believe you will allow, separated from the ancient faith, was there then existing a church in your country, or was there not? And if you

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allow that there was a church, then you must allow that Christ was with it, because he has promised that he will be with his church even unto the end of the world."

George was aware that there was some fallacy in all this, but not being prepared for controversies of this kind, and not, in fact, having his arguments ready, he hesitated a moment, during which pause the priest continued with an air of perfect self-confidence, tempered, however, at the same time, with the politeness of a man accustomed to polished society.

"You, my dear sir," he said, "as I understand, in what you call your church, claim to draw your ordination from holy mother church, asserting with confidence an unbroken succession from the apostles. Am I right in my statement of the pretensions of your establishment?"

George bowed acquiescence, and was again attempting to speak, when the priest went on.

"Permit me, sir, to ask this question: if a servant or an agent receives authority from a master to act in his name, and if this servant or agent afterward leaves his master, and sets up for himself in any trade or business, has he, I ask, a right to say, I still act under the authority of my master, and avail himself of his master's privileges? Or in some degree to change my example —if I give a letter of introduction or credit to a person travelling on my business, and if after a time that person should refuse to attend to the terms on which we were mutually agreed, and in consideration of which I gave him that letter, and openly withdraws himself from my connection, has this man a right to produce the letter which I gave him, and say, I claim such and such benefits by virtue of that letter? You will observe, my dear sir, that I use the mildest tarms; I bring no harsh or railing accusation, although I feel that you have not acted generously by us. But you now see that you are no church—you have never been called by Christ, and from this reason alone you have no marks of a church, nor have you any priesthood; for how can he hear without a preacher, and how can he preach unless he be sent?"

As the priest was uttering these last expressions, he made some steps in a retreating direction, and then bowing hastily, yet with extreme courtesy, "I am sorry, my dear sir," he added, "but I have not another moment to spare. May the Almighty shed a purer light

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on your darkened mind! Be assured of my best wishes;" and the next minute he was seen gliding down the steep pathway towards the town, his black drapery floating behind him as it was gently agitated by the breeze from the Mediterranean.

"Vanquished!" thought George, as soon as he had recovered from his amazement; "routed, discomfited, and yet there is not one item of sound reasoning in his whole discourse—not a word of truth from beginning to end. I am mad with myself—could not I have found a word to say? What was the matter with me—was I dumb—was I tongue-tied?" and he turned back into the house, perfectly amazed at himself, and more angry even than amazed.

"What is the matter with George?" said Julia, when they were seated at breakfast.

"What troubles you, my noble nephew?" asked Mr. Morley; we were looking to you to raise our spirits, for, as the ladies say, we are rather low and poorly just at this time, and you promised pretty well yesterday, but this morning you fail us altogether. Depend upon it, George, all this uproar about religion will not answer—it will ruin your health, and make you an old man before you are a young one."

To all this, and much more of the same sort, George made little reply, for his mind was greatly troubled. He had without reflection rushed into a contest with a priest; he had entertained no doubts of his own fitness for the battle, and he still thought that he could have answered the Jesuit, and confounded all his arguments, had not he stopped him so very adroitly, taking himself off so suddenly when he had delivered himself of all he intended to say, not considering that in so doing he acted according to his calling, as the defender of his church, which being an earthly, not a heavenly one,—a carnal, and not a spiritual one, it behooved him to count every one unclean who did not submit to its decrees. This man was, in fact, a Pharisee, and his feelings and principles were in unison with those who are recorded in Scripture to have used this language, (John ix. 34), "They answered and said unto him" (that is, to the blind man who had received his sight), "Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us?" The scorn implied in the manner of this Jesuit was in after-life a lesson to George, and an admonition to himself,

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when actually ordained as a minister of the Church of England, not to assume a superiority which no human ordination can bestow.

However, the young man could not help feeling, that as the conference had ended, the Jesuit had, or would feel he had, the advantage; and he was so thoroughly vexed at his own entire failure, which he justly attributed to his having entered into the lists too lightly armed, and in a spirit of too much self-assurance, that he could no sooner disengage himself from his relations than he hastened to seek Mr. Reynolds, and he was so far fortunate that he had hardly opened the garden gate before he met him.

"I was coming to look after you, my young friend," said the worthy gentleman, "and to pay my compliments to your parents. But what is the matter—you seem to be in trouble?"

George, having engaged his friend to walk on with him, then entered into the circumstances which had led to the conversation with the priest, in which he had made so poor a figure.

Mr. Reynolds could scarcely help smiling as George described the triumphant air with which his adversary had glided away.

"My dear young friend," he answered, "you have, it seems, entered into conversation with a Jesuit, and you are not equal to him, although you have truth on your side. Such as he is, have all their arguments ready prepared, all cut and dried, and near at hand. And you must observe, that whatever answers you might have made, he would not hear them. This was his art. But we will take his arguments one by one; and first, his quotation from Matt. x. 35, 'For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.' We may allow that he is sincere in the principle he derives from this quotation, and also we may believe that he might also be sincere, when speaking of himself, in using the words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. iv. 16, 'Wherefore' (that is, because I am a servant and minister of the only true church), 'I beseech ye, be followers of me.' For if he is persuaded that there is no salvation beyond the pale of that church, his zeal is honest and praiseworthy; but it should also admonish us of the danger of listening to Roman

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Catholics, for if they believe in their own church, they cannot refrain from endeavouring to make proselytes."

"I see that," replied George; "I do not condemn their zeal, but I utterly disapprove of the means they take to effect their purpose."

"It is proverbially a Jesuitical principle that the end sanctifies the means," replied Mr. Reynolds. "But to proceed with our examination of our Jesuit's discourse; for the answer which he gave to your question relative to reading the Scriptures is such a one as none but a Jesuit would have given. It is a known fact in this country (for you are aware that I am not here for the first time), that Bibles are not allowed to the people, neither can they be procured. I speak from the knowledge of facts; and to say that when a person desires to read for himself he must ask permission, is in fact to say nothing while the priests have power to refuse that permission."

"I see that," replied George.

"But let us pass on," resumed Mr. Reynolds, "to the most material argument used by this crafty pleader, which consists in wresting to his own purposes the words of our Lord, as they stand in Matt. xviii. 19–20, and also in Matt. xviii. 20,—'Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded, and lo I am with you always unto the end of the world. Amen.' 'For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.'"

"I will confess," said George, "that these references did confound me, as they were brought forward by the priest: in fact, I had not leisure to examine them, or to detect the fallacy of his arguments."

"I do not wonder at this," replied Mr. Reynolds, "when I consider your education, wherein this error, though in a modified form, is made a part of a young man's creed."

"I am more and more confused," said George.

"The mistake lies," replied Mr. Reynolds, "in the false notion inherited by many Protestants from the papists of the nature of that church with which Christ has promised to be unto the end of the world; and I am almost inclined to apprehend that every individual who

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holds this fundamental error cannot be said to be wholly cut off from popery."

"I am still in the dark, sir," said George. "What do you mean by a fundamental error?"

"I reply by another question," returned Mr. Reynolds; "what do you mean by a church? for before we can ascertain what is signified by the passages which we have just quoted from the Gospel, we must discover what reference they have to the church, inasmuch as the word church is not used in either passage, though I think your Jesuit introduced that word in his quotation."

"He certainly did," replied George, "and perhaps in the latter quotation, 'where two or three are met together,' he would insist that the idea is implied."

"We return, then," said Mr. Reynolds, "to the question what a church is, and whether we may gather from Scripture that there is only one church, or that there may be many. It would be tedious, could I do it, to repeat all the passages in which this word is used in the plural, yet I can recollect one or two, viz. Acts ix. 31, 'Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea.' Rom. xvi. 4, 'To whom all the churches of the Gentiles gave thanks.' 1 Cor. vii. 17, 'So ordain I in all churches;' and I think that I once counted above thirty other places where the word is not only plural, but from the context cannot be taken otherwise."

"But again, my dear sir," said George, "there are passages in which the church is spoken of in the singular, as, for instance, Ephesians v. 23, 'For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church.'"

"The church, when spoken of in the singular and in its highest sense," replied Mr. Reynolds, "is not any visible earthly church, but the church of the first-born in heaven, of which the members are as sheep wandering through all the mountains, and upon every high hill, and scattered upon all the face of the earth, waiting for the return of the shepherd, when they are to be gathered together upon the high mountains of Israel. In this sense the one only and true church is a hidden one, or invisible, and the promises which have been made to it, and the privileges which are given to it, are spiritual, and have no present completion in those things which are temporal. And here you see the error, I might say

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the heresy, of those who look for one supreme visible church on this present earth. Hence we find these words in St. Matthew (xxiv. 24–26), 'Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo here is Christ, and lo there, believe not; for there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect. Behold I have told you before. Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold he is in the desert, go not forth; Behold he is in the secret chambers, believe it not.'"

"But, my dear sir," said George, "will you permit me to remark—"

"You are not conversing with a Jesuit now, my young friend," replied Mr. Reynolds. "Say all that is in your heart, and expect the best answer I am permitted to give you."

"Then," said George, "if there is no supreme visible church, how am I to know, who am determined upon the ministry, where I may find the best earthly establishment? how am I to know that the Church of England is better than every other visible church?"

"Every visible church is imperfect," replied Mr. Reynolds; "inasmuch as its rulers are still in the flesh; and I, who have been a great traveller, and have seen much of Christian societies in all countries, can see error in all and each of them. I have ceased, therefore, both from the study of Scripture and from experience, to look for perfection in any visible church. And with respect to the Church of England, I see so much to admire, especially in its articles, that were I to choose again, I should not know where to find a visible banner under which I would sooner enrol myself than under that of the established church of our own country, of which, as you well know, this is one of the leading articles of faith—Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

"You have shaken some preconceived notions of mine respecting the Church of England," said George; "where I got them I can hardly say, because they are generally admitted."

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"What may they be?" asked Mr. Reynolds.

"Why," returned George, "they are these, that ordination has descended in a direct line from the apostles to our church; hence, that all persons not ordained by our bishops, or by bishops having received ordination through the same channel, are, in fact—what shall I say?—no ministers at all."

"You do not mean to say that the belief in this is required by our church?"

"No," replied George; "but it is a fact, that our Protestant ministers at the Reformation received their ordination from Roman Catholics."

"Undoubtedly," said Mr. Reynolds; "but what then? do you mean to say that the power of ordination was confided by the apostles only to the Church of Rome? If you had such an idea, there is no wonder that you could not stand before the Jesuit."

"I had admitted this idea," replied George; "but I had not particularly inquired into it."

"Let us now, then, examine this matter," said Mr. Reynolds; "let us admit for a minute the false and unscriptural notion of a one supreme visible church; let us inquire upon what grounds we are assured of finding it at Rome.

"We know that Jerusalem and Antioch had churches, and we also know, by the Epistle to the Romans, that St. Paul wrote to those called of Jesus Christ at Rome; and it appears to me also, from Romans xv. 20, wherein the apostle says, 'Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation,' that he had, in fact, been the first to name the name of Christ at Rome; and it seems clear also that St. Paul not only opened this church, but continued his care for it without assistance from Peter, or any other apostle, since we find this passage in Romans i. 11, 'For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end you may be established.' If, therefore, there is a primitive mother church, it must not be sought for at Rome, but at Jerusalem, or more properly at Antioch, for these and many others were before that of Rome; neither is there any proof that St. Peter ever was at Rome, and even if he were, what is the proof of his infallibility, for St. Paul withstood him to the face? And farther, granting that he was Bishop of Rome, who can trace a regular

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succession of bishops from this apostle, when it is well known that the succession of popes was broken in several instances, two or three ruling at the same time in different parts of the papal dominion? But I have said enough, my young friend; I shall confuse you, and I hold that when we have once proved that there is no ground in Scripture for the existence of one supreme visible church, there is no necessity to prove that the pretensions of the Romish church are either inferior or superior to those of Jerusalem, Antioch, or Constantinople."

"I am surprised," said George.

"At what?" asked Mr. Reynolds.

"At myself," replied the young man; "I seem waking from a dream. How could it have happened, that when so many clouds of prejudice respecting the doctrines of religion were removed from my mind, this popish heresy respecting some supreme visible church did not pass away at the same time?"

"Because it did not please the Lord it should be so," replied Mr. Reynolds; "I can give no other reason. But now to speak of your little sister. My advice is, that she should be removed as soon as possible from this place: you will never more find peace here; you have stirred a hornet's nest, and you must run for it; the little girl should, if possible, be got away unsuspected by the enemy. I have an idea—hear it, and consult your friends upon it. It is the same to me whether I stay here a fortnight or a quarter of a year. We will wait here till your sister is able to travel; Mrs. Reynolds shall then take charge of her. You may join us when you please; we will go on to Genoa or elsewhere, and your parents can follow us. My reasons for suggesting this plan are numerous, and you shall say nothing about it now, but consider it and discuss it."

George thanked his new friend for this very kind offer, and thus they parted, Mr. Reynolds saying, that in consideration of the situation of the family, he would defer his visit to another day.

This conversation had occupied much time, and when George returned he found that Lord and Lady M—— had been at the house, and that they had been urgently pressing Mrs. Morley, her son, and daughters to proceed with them to Rome; and although they had not

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seen Mr. and Mrs. Rosebury, they had empowered the old lady to solicit them to join the party.

Mrs. Morley immediately opened upon the subject to George when he entered, saying, "What think you of this plan? I know you would like to see Rome; and for my part, I am heartily tired of this wearisome Nice."

George pleaded that Rome was the last place to which Victoria ought to be taken.

"And is all our comfort to be sacrificed to Victoria!" said Julia, impatiently.

The grandmother then hinted, that if Mr. Rosebury did not like Rome, he might stay with Victoria, while Julia and Mrs. Rosebury accompanied them to Italy. "The change of air and scene would do my daughter good," she added; "she is very low, George. I am uneasy on her account. These family disagreements will ruin her health."

"Then they should be terminated as soon as possible," replied George. "Can I see my mother?—why does she keep her room?" and he rang the bell, and sent to know if his mother would admit him.

I am not exactly informed what passed at this time between George and his mother, as neither party ever revealed it; but the result of it was this, that after a short conference George was sent for his father, who came at the first word; and, without yielding in the smallest degree, for he had resolved on a change of habits in the family, the little difference, which was in danger of becoming a long and serious one, was terminated, and when Mrs. Morley came in to discuss Lady M.'s proposal, she found her daughter and son-in-law conversing amicably together.

She was a little disconcerted by this, but proceeded immediately to confer on the future movements of the family. To leave Nice seemed to be the determination of each party, and as Mrs. Morley could not have her daughter with her without that daughter's husband, which, since the late reconciliation, she found would be impossible, she proposed that they should all together proceed to Rome.

To this proposal Mrs. Rosebury made no answer, but that she wished to be directed by her husband, who, in his turn, pleaded that Victoria must not be taken to Rome.

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Mrs. Morley then asked if Julia might go with her, as she had made up her own mind to proceed with Lady M.

Mr. Rosebury, though with much kindness and courtesy, also declined this proposal, saying that he wished to keep his children together as long as possible.

There was much said on both sides, Mrs. Rosebury being inclined to plead for Julia's proceeding with her grandmother; but Mr. Rosebury, knowing his son's private opinion, and having that son near him, remained firm, and the grandmother was obliged to give way, though evidently displeased. She, however, restrained her displeasure till she got out of the room. Nevertheless, it had a strong effect in hastening her measures; she immediately set herself to prepare for her departure, and within a week from that time was with her son and two younger daughters on her way to Genoa, in company with Lord and Lady M.

But Mrs. Morley having left Mrs. Rosebury's apartment, George informed his parents of Mr. Reynolds's proposal respecting Victoria, urging the necessity of getting her away before the servants suspected what was going forward.

Mr. Rosebury saw this necessity, and only objected that Mrs. Reynolds was a stranger to him. "However," he added, "we will see her, and if we find her what George says she is, we will gratefully accept her proposal."

But as I have been under the necessity of lengthening my narrative beyond the bounds which I had at first prescribed to myself, I shall hasten over the ensuing week by simply stating that the recovery of Victoria was progressive during the whole time, and quite as rapid as could be expected, and that she was able to be brought down a day or two before her grandmamma went, and established, by her father's desire, in Julia's sleeping apartment, where she ought to have been years before. That the family now about to separate were, at least, perfectly polite to each other, with the exception of Julia, who was fretful, dissatisfied, rude, and ready to quarrel with every one, feeling that her grandmother had not pleaded her cause so urgently as she might have done. That during this week Mrs. Rosebury had seen Mrs. Reynolds many times, and had

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consented to place Victoria under her care; while Mr. Rosebury had, at the same time, resolved not to take any step towards his own removal with his wife and Julia, for George was to go with Victoria, until this last was safe out of Nice. Mr. Reynolds, however, did not propose to proceed till more than a week after the day appointed for the departure of Mrs. Morley.

In the mean time, George had not seen his Jesuit again. Mr. Rosebury's health and spirits were recovering as his mind became more and more easy, and as the bright and enlivening views of the gospel broke in more and more upon him; and Mrs. Rosebury hardly seemed to know her own mind, and scarcely to have discovered whether the changes which were taking place in the family were likely to tend to her happiness or otherwise.

At length Mrs. Morley and her party took their leave; it was on a Monday morning after breakfast, and George, seeing his mother burst into tears as she looked on the empty chairs so lately occupied by her relations, took the occasion, in a manner most sweet and son-like, to place himself by her, to console her, and to point out to her how all dependence on earthly comforts and earthly friends must one time or other fail, and how necessary it was, therefore, to have a dependence on that anchor of hope which is fixed on the Rock of Ages.

Mrs. Rosebury was not one of those persons who took up things by halves. Pleasure had hitherto been her idol, and she had sacrificed every thing to it; but she had been made to understand that she must give it up. The struggle had been severe, but she had seen no means of resisting the resolution of her husband without a separation, which she loved him far too well to think of for a moment. But being bereaved of her former idols, her mind, unknown to itself, turned towards the object which had lately presented itself, if not in a new, yet in an improved form, and this object was her son. From his first conversation with her she had begun to feel the influence of his persuasive manner; her pride, too, in having such a son, was awakened, and thus from many merely human motives was his power over her daily increasing, and, on the occasion of which we are now speaking, it was so great that she permitted him to persuade her that, if she sincerely loved the friends who

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were gone, she would join him in prayer for them. The father seconded the motion, and thus commenced the union of that family in prayer. Nor did George permit the habit to drop till its continuance was equally desired by every individual.

We now, after this long digression, return to the immediate history of Victoria. It had been thought best that nothing more should be said to her on the subject of religion till she was removed from Nice, at least, not directly, although she was so closely watched that it was thought no servant could come near to her. With respect to her own feelings and opinions, it would be difficult to define them. Perhaps, upon the whole, a sort of vague fear, of she scarcely knew what, was the leading feeling of her breast, in consequence of which, before she left her own room, she took out of the cupboard behind her bed a figure of Santa Rosalia, who is a sort of tutelary saint of Nice. This figure was about six inches long, and represented Santa Rosalia holding a bleeding heart, stuck through with many arrows. Having secured to herself the possession of this figure, she carried it down into her new sleeping apartment, hiding it behind her pillow, and putting it before her whenever she knelt down to pray, but so cautiously, as she thought, that Julia should not see it. It happened, however, that two or three evenings after Mrs. Morley had gone, Julia, who was extremely irritated against Victoria, to whom she attributed in a great measure the disappointment she had lately experienced, espied this image as it lay before Victoria, who was kneeling at her prayers, and observing where her sister hid it after she had finished those prayers, she very quietly crept to the side of her bed, and putting her hand under the bolster, drew out the image.

"What have you got there!" exclaimed Victoria, flaming with indignation.

"Only one of your idols," said Julia; "and a pretty thing this is, indeed, to say one's prayers to;" and she held the figure in the flame of the candle, above Victoria's reach.

All the prejudices and prepossessions of the child were roused on this occasion, and a very violent scene ensued, the end of which, however, was, that Julia, opening the window, threw out the figure into the garden, and Victoria went crying and sobbing to her bed, though

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she was afraid to complain, not knowing what part her parents and brother might take in the quarrel. She, however, searched for the image in the gravel under the window the next day, but could neither find it whole or broken, for it had been found by Fabio when he opened the lower windows early in the morning, and delivered by him to Bianca, as a proof how Mademoiselle Victoria was departing from her respect for holy things.

In the mean time, Mrs. Rosebury was quietly collecting and packing Victoria's clothes, having informed the child of the plan for her removal with Mrs. Reynolds, to which she made no objection, being really pleased in her own mind with the thought of getting away from Bianca, for whom she had conceived excessive terror.

At length, on the eve of the departure of Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds, Mr. and Mrs. Rosebury proposed walking down to the hotel in the town, to make some final arrangements. It was a moonlight night, and they were to be absent only two hours. George was with them, and they charged Julia not to leave her sister for a moment. She promised faithfully, and they left the young people without apprehension, because they supposed that the servants had not the least idea that Victoria was so soon to go, for they had even taken the precaution to pack her clothes in George's trunks, that the luggage, when carried down to the hotel, might pass for his. But, as Bianca said, her masters and mistresses were not quite so deep as those they had to deal with; and truly I agree with her, that in a *ruse de guerre* a papist will ever have the advantage of a Protestant. But in order not to embarrass my story, I shall say that the elders of the party, having made their final arrangements, and the travellers having determined to go off by five in the morning, it was suggested that it might be as well for Victoria to be brought down to the hotel that night, on every account; and accordingly George was despatched to fetch her immediately, the evening being so extremely mild that it was thought she would enjoy the walk. It was probably about ten o'clock when he set out on his errand.

In the mean time, Julia and Victoria had sat in the boudoir, of which apartment I do not now speak for the first time. They never had been, nor were they then, the most agreeable companions to each other. Julia was imperious, and Victoria reserved, and in consequence

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the time was hanging very heavily, and passing very slowly, when, at length, it might be about ten minutes before ten, the night being somewhat dark, though, as I said before, very mild and fine, Fabio came to the door of the room, saying that there was a person below who particularly wanted to see Miss Julia.

"Who can it be?" asked the young lady.

"It is, I think," returned Fabio, "a person from the milliner. She has some things to show mademoiselle from her mistress, and she wishes to see her alone, as she desires no one else may see them."

"Ah," said Julia, "that is well; show her into the parlour below, I will be with her in a moment."

"And I will come, too," said Victoria.

"Indeed you shall not," replied Julia, and she seized one candle, for there were two burning on the table, not observing that Fabio had run away with the other, and away they fled, Fabio dexterously banging the door behind his young mistress and drawing the bolt, the sound of which was not distinguished from the other noises which he contrived to make.

Victoria screamed within for a light, but no one heard her, and she was just rising to seek Fabio, and to scold him for his carelessness in leaving her in the dark, when suddenly a lurid glare flashed across the marble pavement of the terrace, the same which I have mentioned on a former occasion. Victoria looked towards it; it became more intense, yet still preserving its lurid character, and the next instant a figure appeared before the window. It was precisely that of Santa Rosalia as represented by the little image which Julia had thrown out of the window. In one hand it held a blood-red heart, pierced with many arrows, and in the other a flaming torch: it stood before the window tossing its torch, and using various frightful gestures. Victoria looked at it for one instant with the gaze, no doubt, of excessive terror, and then uttering one wild shriek, sprang to the farthest end of the room, her eyes being still bent on the horrible vision.

At that instant George, who had entered, not by the door of the house, but by a window left accidentally open on the side of the door, had run up stairs, and was come into the saloon astonished at the pale deadly glare which was shed on every object; but before he could ascertain what it was, the wild shriek of Victoria burst

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upon his ears. He could think of nothing else than that the house was on fire: he rushed to the door of the boudoir, but as it did not yield to his hand, he had recourse again to a window, and springing out upon the terrace, he saw the figure at the window; but he saw it clearly only for one moment, for this person, being aware of him, instantly threw down the torch and fled: the flame flickered for a moment on the pavement, and then went out, but George pursued the figure along the terrace, and through an open door, and across several chambers—the one flying and the other pursuing, till at length he succeeded in seizing the dress of the person, and bringing her to a stand.

"Who or what are you?" said he; "and what black work have you been about?"

"Nothing—nothing, sir," replied the other; "I was only jesting this blessed night. By the holy Virgin and all the saints, I meant no harm; but Miss Victoria was frightened, and I meant only to amuse her."

"Zenone," said George, "I know you, and I understand you. Well, be it so; if you meant only a jest, you cannot object to come with me to my sister, and let her see who it is who has frightened her so much. Nay, take off none of your paraphernalia. if it is a jest, let her see it as it is." And with that he seized her by the arm, and drew her into the saloon, where he found Fabio, all obsequious civility, and inquiring most innocently what possibly could have happened to frighten mademoiselle. Julia too was there, and the door of the boudoir being open, several persons (for the servants were all come up) were rubbing the temples of Victoria, and trying to bring her to herself; Bianca, who was the foremost of these, pressing her in the kindest accents to say what had frightened her, the old woman being, no doubt, pretty well assured at the same time that she would not dare to tell.

"Stand on one side," said George, as he almost dragged forward Zenone; "I will relieve my sister's mind. I have a cure here, I believe, for many of her evils. Look at me, my Victoria—my little sister," he added; "look at me, and trust in your own brother, your true friend. You see this woman, who has thus terrified you, in impiously assuming some form which, I presume, she pretends to call sacred; look at her, and may you be ever set free from a form of belief which

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admits of such a principle of action as this, viz. that the end sanctifies the means."

Zenone would have spoken, but George bade her to be silent; and having ordered Victoria's cloak and bonnet to be brought, he took her by the arm, still trembling as she was, and led her without another word from the saloon into the garden.

"Where are we going, George?" asked Victoria.

"To Nice," he replied; "to the hotel where you are to sleep, and from whence you are to proceed to-morrow."

She drew her arm from her brother, and stood still. She was on the gravel walk on the eastern front of the house.

"Going from hence!" she said; "from this my birth-place, and never to return!" And bursting into tears, "Farewell," she added, "for ever farewell, dear native place! Farewell, poor Teresa; you meant no harm when you tried to teach me your religion. Farewell, dear places where I used to be with you, my beloved nurse. Farewell, sweet orange groves and fields of olives; farewell, dear pleasant hills—no one whom she leaves behind loves you so well as poor Victoria does."

"If so, my little sister," answered George, "pray that this sweet region, so peculiarly blessed by nature, may also be equally abundant in spiritual graces—that the clouds of error may roll away from the minds of its inhabitants, and that its spiritual atmosphere may become as bright as its natural one. Pray for it, and pray in the name of the Redeemer, that only name through which we are taught to address our God."

"I will, I will, dear George," sobbed Victoria; and taking his arm again, she passed for the last time through the garden-gate, and along the pathway which leads to Nice. There she was received into the arms of her parents as into a refuge divinely provided for her tender years, and her real friends had reason very soon to acknowledge that the detection of the last effort of those who would have confirmed her in error had, with the blessing from above, more effect in opening her mind than any measure they could have adopted.

The next morning the little girl left Nice, with Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds and her brother; her parents and Julia followed as soon afterward as the closing of their affairs in Nice would allow. The two parties met at

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Turin, and as Mr. Reynolds strongly recommended the removal to a Protestant country, they bent their course towards Geneva, where they were enabled to enjoy the society of persons professing the purest Christian principles, and to attend a ministry as far as possible removed from the errors of papacy, though not, I fear, in the established church of Geneva.

They were blessed for many months in the society of Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds, who were enabled by the Lord the Spirit to lead them on in the way of holiness. During this time Victoria became teachable, as a child ought to be; Mr. Rosebury was confirmed and enlightened, and all the energies of Mrs. Rosebury's character became directed into the right channel.

Julia alone remained restive, and gave her parents much affliction. At length she married contrary to their wishes, and received her reward in the unkindness of her husband, who, after a few years, wholly abandoned her, in consequence of which she returned to her parents with two little girls. I am, however, happy to add, that her afflictions have been blessed to her, and that she is now an altered character.

The last I heard of this family is, that they are living in England, in the same parish of which George is the minister; that the blessing of God is with them, and that Victoria is all that pious parents could desire.

END OF VICTORIA.

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ARZOOMUND.

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ARZOOMUND.

CHAPTER I.

I AM now, my gentle reader, about to speak to you of a country at least five thousand miles from hence, by the nearest way which could be taken, even if it were possible to assume the wings of the eagle, and to fly over mountains, seas, and deserts, in one direct and unvarying course.

This country is called by the natives Hindostan, and by us the East Indies; it lies in the south of Asia, under a burning sun.

This region is for the most part dry and parched, but in places where it is well watered it is fertile, and produces corn, fruit, and flowers in rich abundance. Among the woods and mountains, and the swamps and marshes of this country, live many dreadful savage beasts, and serpents of various forms and monstrous size. Alligators and crocodiles also infest the shallows of the rivers.

The first inhabitants of this country were, probably, a branch of the sons of Ham, who, at the time of the dispersion of mankind at the Tower of Babel, came down into the south, and spread along the sea-shore towards the east. The present descendants of these primitive inhabitants are deplorably ignorant, idolatrously worshipping images of wood, and stone, and clay. Before the time of Alexander the Great, who lived more than two thousand years ago, the ancient Hindoos were joined by another race of people, who came from the west, and who were probably descended from Shem. These new-comers soon became intermingled among the former inhabitants; yet a distinction has been all along preserved between them; so that even in our own days, it is possible to distinguish each class from the other.

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These interlopers are now the Brahmins, who monopolize the most honourable offices among this people, being both their public teachers and the priests of their idol-temples.

The ancient Hindoos and their incorporated acquaintances the Brahmins were not, however, allowed to retain possession of Hindostan many ages after the birth of Christ; for about one thousand years ago, another race, descended from Japhet, poured in upon them from the north. These conquerors were Moguls, or Tartars. They ravaged the country with fire and sword, and brought with them another religion, which was little better than that of the idolaters. This religion is that which was taught by Mahomet, an Arabian impostor, falsely called the Prophet. The Mahometans, or Mussulmans, are not idolaters, that is, they do not profess to make images of God, but they deny the divinity of Christ, and reject the Scriptures of the Christians, receiving the Koran in its place,—a book composed by their prophet, and abounding with distorted truths and wicked inventions. These followers of Mahomet are now intermixed in every town and village among the old Hindoos, though they never eat nor intermarry with them; and it is hard to say which are the most wicked of these two denominations. At present, the English, having conquered nearly the whole of Hindostan, rule over both these discordant parties, subjecting them to the law of kindness, and preventing them from tearing each other to pieces like tigers of the desert.

Having thus given a little outline of the history of the country in which I have placed the scene of my narrative, I shall proceed, without further delay, to the narrative itself, which, I trust, will be read with greater interest, when I inform my reader that many of the characters and events were found in real life, and are now represented without any colouring of fancy.

In the district of Almora, which lies between the first and second range of the Himmalaya, or Snowy Mountains, in the north of Hindostan, is a little village, occupied by natives. Its only ornament, at the time my narrative begins, was a mosque, or place of worship belonging to the Mussulmans, which had been built some centuries before. This mosque was falling into decay for want of repair; nevertheless, its light and beautiful

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turrets, its horns, or minarets, mounted with the Mahometan half-moon, formed altogether a beautiful object, half visible as it was among the tamarind and pepul-trees with which the lowly houses of the natives were encompassed. The village itself stood on a shelf of a rocky hill, on such an elevation that it not only commanded a view of the whole plain to the south as far as the mountains, but also a long reach of the mountains themselves, whose summits, covered with eternal snow, exhibited the semblance of pyramids, towers, and battlements of adamant, their brilliant outlines being strongly marked upon the dark-blue ether of the southern sky, and their bases undistinguishable by the eye of the beholder.

But in vain were these glories of creation spread before the inhabitants of Dira (such being the name of the little village before spoken of), for it requires an awakened intellect to admire the glories of creation, and these poor villagers were so besotted by their idolatries and the delusions of their false religions, that they had no other cares but the providing themselves with food, and no other pleasures than the enjoyment of that ease of body and indolence of mind which are considered as the sum of human felicity by the majority of the natives of India.

One of the most opulent persons of Dira, about the year 1770, was a Hindoo carpenter of the name of Mockdoom, who chiefly subsisted by making those *charpoies*, or coarse bedsteads, which are used by the lower classes in India, and which are so light as to be easily removed from place to place at the pleasure of the owner. This man had a brother, residing in the village, and an only son, of whom he was very fond, and to whom he looked forward as one who was to be the support of his old age. This young man, whom we shall call Alfoo, did not, however, prove to be the comfort his father had expected, for in proportion as he grew in years he grew in wickedness. For a length of time he spent his nights in all kinds of excesses, and his days in sleep; and, at length, on his father expostulating with him, he took occasion to dig into a hole in the corner of a wall, where he knew that his father was in the habit of concealing the few *rupees* which he had treasured up against his old age, and made off one fine moonlight night towards the south.

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We do not mean to follow Alfoo through all his wanderings, for some years elapsed, after he had left his father in the manner I have described, before he could obtain any thing like a place of rest. After some years, however, he came to Merut, a station not very far distant from the river Ganges, about twelve hundred miles by water above Calcutta; and as the Europeans had just taken possession of the place, and were building their cantonments, not very far distant from the old native city, he presently obtained a good living by going from house to house selling tapes and thread, perfumes and essences, *bangles** and brooches, combs and pins, and such other articles as commonly make up the pack of a pedler in India. A new *bazar*, or native village, had grown up near the European cantonments long before the barracks and officers' houses were finished; and here Alfoo provided himself with a house, which, as it consisted of only four outer mud walls, with a centre partition, by which two chambers were formed, and a *chopper*, or portable roof of thatch, was soon completed, and nearly as soon furnished,—a few mats, some brass pans, and a bedstead forming the whole garniture of the household. Here Alfoo carried on so brisk a trade that he soon found himself in a condition to bear the expenses of a marriage feast. He accordingly bargained with a creditable neighbour for his daughter; and, having brought his wife home, began to consider himself a man of some consequence. It may be asked, whether he had not now and then some uneasy feelings respecting his father; but it is not my present intention to give any answer to this inquiry, as this matter will be explained in the sequel.

In the mean time, every thing went on smoothly with Alfoo. Within a year after his marriage he had a son, to whom he gave the name of Arzoomund, and he was now so rich as to be able to hire a man to assist him in carrying his boxes. He also now provided himself with very respectable clothes, appearing in the warm weather with broad borders of silk upon his muslin garments, and in the colder season with a lined tunic of Benares chintz. He was a tall, well-featured man, with dark and sparkling eyes, and, had the expression of his countenance been open and his smile agreeable, he

* Bangles are rings of silver, worn around the ankles.

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might have passed for very handsome. As it was, however, there was much in his manner and appearance which promoted the sale of his goods; and as he always seemed to be obliging and ready to serve his customers, even in things not directly within his line of business, his trade went on successfully, and it was supposed that he had a private stock of *rupees*, though he took good care that no one should know in what place—a precaution which you may say was all right, inasmuch as Alfoo's neighbours were probably not more honest than himself. Alfoo's traffic was thus carried on with success till his son, Arzoomund, was more than twelve years old, at which time his wife died, and was buried and forgotten, at least by her husband and neighbours; for she had been a *purdah wallee*, that is, she had sat all her lifetime behind a curtain, and had no more ideas than those she could gather from a certain wrinkled old hag, who, after Alfoo began to get forward in the world, was employed by him to wait upon his wife and prepare his meals. Arzoomund, however, shed some tears at the funeral pile of his mother, and whenever he afterward mentioned her name in discourse, he always spoke of her with tenderness. And, indeed, he was likely to remember her, for his father's treatment of him was always harsh, while in his indulgent mother he found a ready attention to the voice of his complaints.

It was about this time that Alfoo, being now a man of consequence in the market-place, bethought himself of giving his son some education, and for this purpose he placed him under the charge of a certain old pedagogue, who kept a school under a shed at that end of the village which opened towards a great sandy plain at the east of the cantonments. This old schoolmaster was a man of a venerable aspect, having a noble gray beard, a thin attenuated set of features, a fine set eye, and a smooth tongue; nevertheless, there was not, perhaps, many worse old men, in point of morals, throughout the wide extent of the plain of the Ganges than the well-spoken old gentleman in question.

As Alfoo was considered one of the chief men of the market-place, Mootee Ram, the above-mentioned schoolmaster, was not a little pleased when he saw him enter the court of the school, and present his son as a scholar, informing the schoolmaster at the same time that he must initiate him in the mysteries of reading and writing

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his own language in the Naugree character, with the art of arithmetic, &c. Many were the compliments which the old man poured forth on the occasion, and many the bows which he bestowed upon the tape-merchant, assuring him that he should have no difficulty in making his son an excellent scholar, although the venerable pedagogue could not be otherwise than aware that no pupil had ever returned from his school with ability to read even his native language with propriety. The father, however, being no great judge of these matters, was very well satisfied, and saw his son with considerable pleasure ranged in a line with the rest of the boys, on the sand, in the middle of the yard, in a way to commence that course of study which was to fit him for the same situation in life in which his father had obtained more *rupees* than he dared to acknowledge.

Now, inasmuch as many of my readers are never likely to see an Hindostanee school conducted according to the old order of things, I feel myself inclined in this place to afford them as clear a prospect of the scene as it is possible to do in the cold colouring of words.

In the first place, I would have my reader depict a dusty yard, on which a broiling sun is pouring its utmost fury, being flanked with a shed, into which the master and his scholars may retreat in rainy or windy weather. Let him further figure to himself a number of little black boys, some of whom may have fine countenances, although among them specimens may not be wanting of much natural and moral deformity, sitting in a row in the dust, being for the most part nearly without clothes, and squatting on the ground in a manner much resembling that of a frog in the most direct attitude ever assumed by that creature. Directly opposite this row of boys will generally be found the schoolmaster, who, for the most part, occupies himself with his cocoanut pipe, or in hearing the gossip of the market-place, from any chance passenger who may take the trouble of visiting his premises: being, nevertheless, able on occasions to rouse himself into activity, and to give out the letters and syllables which the boys are to repeat or to write on the sand before them, with an energy which does him honour through the whole *bazar*, and makes its poor inhabitants marvel at his deep and noisy erudition; and on these occasions, when the master gives the word, and the multitudes of his pupils take it up, it is incon-

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ceivable what an overpowering shout proceeds from the school, and what an idea of diligence and activity is conveyed to the honourable person who may chance to be passing by at the time, it being considered the greatest mark of respect which a Hindoo can pay to his superior to shout in his ears to the utmost extent of his voice. Nevertheless, it must not be supposed that these violent exertions are frequent in seminaries of the kind of which we are speaking; and, upon the whole, I have reason to think that no pupil was ever injured by any violent literary exertions in an Indian school-house.

CHAPTER II.

ARZOOMUND remained with Mootee Ram, in the place I have described, for nearly two years; and as, at the end of that time, he could draw letters on the sand as well as any boy in the place, and actually knew a little of arithmetic, at which the Hindoos are in general very expert, his father was therefore satisfied with his acquirements.

In the mean time, a king's regiment, which had been stationed in the infantry barracks and cantonments of Merut, was removed, and another ordered up the country to take its place. Alfoo on this occasion lost many good customers; but he made himself easy on the subject, trusting to his address to gain others among the newcomers, and accordingly waited patiently till he saw the officers' quarters re-occupied, and each family somewhat settled in their new situations.

At Merut there is a triple line of houses for the infantry officers, ranged after the fashion of a camp: each of these houses has large gardens, at the end of which are stables, and houses for servants; these last forming, as it were, a little street or square, occupied by many families. The market-place in which Alfoo resided was not above half a quarter of a mile from the back gates of the last row of these houses.

One day, immediately after the arrival of the infantry regiment above mentioned, while Alfoo was sitting in his shop (which much resembled some of those stalls that

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we see at a fair), arranging a parcel of new goods in the deep recesses of his pedler's box, a certain little hump-backed footman, with a monstrous head and face, which occupied one-fourth at least of the whole length of his person, came up to the stall and informed Alfoo that his mistress wanted tape and thread, and other such matters, and that he himself stood in need of a certain essence or oil for his hair, adding, that if the oil were delivered free to him, he would not fail to introduce the merchant to the lady.

"Very good," said Alfoo, "introduce me to the mistress, and the essence shall be yours." The bargain was accordingly struck, a porter was called to carry the box, and Alfoo was led by the dwarf, across the plain, to the front gate which led to his master's house.

As this pair passed along, the footman, to whom we shall give the name of Babouk, gave the pedler, or *sundook walla* (as such persons are called in India), some little insight into the history of the family into which he was about to introduce him. He informed him that his master and mistress were regular people, and looked much after their affairs, and that, therefore it was necessary to be somewhat cautious with them, and to be careful not to be too bold in his demands upon them; he also added, that the lady was particularly fond of her children, and very much attached on their account to those who took care of them. "Hence," said he, "I have found it necessary to bring you in by stealth, as it were, for if you were to meet the nurse, she would surely turn you back, for she has hitherto supplied the lady with every thing which belongs to your trade, and has got all the *dustoor*, or profit, upon these things herself. You will not, therefore, have the nurse for your friend, but you are sure of the lady's good-will if you will but hearken to what I have to say."

Alfoo was all attention, and the servant went on to inform him, "that his lady, being a European, and a Christian, had got it into her head to make as many Christians as she could, and that she would do any thing for any one who read the Testament, and so," said he, "if you will but ask her if she could tell you where to get a Testament, being particularly desirous to read one, then you will have it all your own way, and she will never employ any other shopkeeper but yourself; only mind

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this, I will have my profit, or you shall never set your foot again within the *compound*."*

By the time this arrangement was made, Alfoo and Babouk had entered the gates, and were come up to the door of the house, where they found the lady sitting at work, with two lovely children, enjoying the cool and fragrant air from the garden that surrounded the house, which was filled with many floworing shrubs and spicy trees. Babouk stepped first, and introduced the pedler, then retreating to some post of observation, at a small distance; while Alfoo began to spread his wares, not forgetting, while the lady examined them, to put in his question respecting the Testament, adding that he had long wished to read it, and that he would give any sum in order to be possessed of it.

The wary pedler observed how the lady's eye brightened, and her cheek flushed, at hearing these words, and saw her hasten with glee to a book-case, from which she brought a Gospel of St. Matthew, which she begged him to accept, proceeding with new spirit to spend her money with so hopeful a subject.

Perhaps my reader may be inclined to ask in this place, "Was not this well-meaning lady over-hasty in not stopping to consider somewhat more of the person on whom she was bestowing this precious gift, and was she not putting herself in the case of one who *casts his pearls before swine?*" In reply to this question, as on a former occasion, I shall say nothing, but shall refer my cautious reader to the sequel of my tale; and in the mean time, in return for his quotation, I will give him another—*Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days.*

The lady bought several things at that time from Alfoo, and, what pleased him better, gave him a commission to come again another day, with some more articles of which she stood in need. Thus the pedler returned to his house, having made some such compliments to the servant as had been before agreed upon between them, and thus the friends parted.

A few days after this, the little Mussulman again stood before the stall of Alfoo, and demanded of him if he had procured the goods which the lady required;

* The residences of Europeans in India, with all the outhouses, grounds, &c., are called *compounds*.

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"for," added he, "I suspect that my lady has another commission for you, and if so, you must remember me, for I well know you will somehow or other make it profitable to yourself."

The pedler begged the servant to inform him of the nature of his commission, and received the following reply:—"The mistress," said he, "is desirous to employ a schoolmaster to teach little boys to read, and she has a mind to preside over their tasks herself; and to make herself sure that they are well taught, she will have the schoolmaster in her own *compound*, and will insist upon his teaching the children thoroughly. What she means by giving herself this trouble I know not, but she has her reasons and her ends to answer, no doubt, and they will appear by-and-by. And what will be required of you, as you know this place and the people in it, is to bring her a schoolmaster, with as many boys as he can muster, the more the better, as he will have four *annas* a head for every pupil, besides six *rupees* every month."

It little matters, in this place, to describe the exclamations of wonder and amazement and the various conjectures uttered by the sage Alfoo, when informed of this very extraordinary humour of the European lady, and though assisted in his conjectures by Babouk, who said, "he really believed his mistress to be very good," he could at length come to no other conclusion than that she did these good deeds for a name among her country people, or that the work had something to do with witchcraft, the pedler affirming that there was once a certain witch at Delhi, who had the art of extracting the livers of little children without their knowledge, and for that purpose used to allure them to her house.

The servant, who had seen more of European society than Alfoo, and was in consequence considerably more enlightened on subjects relative to superstition, though he was never a whit the nearer to the reception of the truth, turned on his heel on hearing this strange surmise, and walked off, exclaiming, "Whaw! whaw!" stopping, however, at a small distance, to remind the pedler to make haste over to his lady.'

Alfoo answered the summons as soon as he had reason to think that his friend Babouk had returned to his master's house, and coming in at the front gate, presented himself before the lady; and, after having settled

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the matters relative to his profession, was requested by her, as the footman had predicted, to procure her a schoolmaster who should live in the *compound*, and teach as many boys as he could muster, stating the wages to be precisely such as the footman had mentioned before.

Alfoo promised to obey the lady, and accordingly repaired without loss of time to Mootee Ram, to offer him the place on certain conditions, one of which was that he should excuse him two *rupees*, which he actually owed him at that time for his son's education.

It was agreed that Alfoo should attend the old schoolmaster the next morning to the lady's residence, and the little footman, who wished to show his alacrity, and the pleasure he had in obeying his lady, on this as on other occasions, took upon himself to be the guide of the party, and for this purpose walked before them over the plain to the back gate of the *compound;* and as he was determined to display his triumph over the nurse in the presence of all his fellow-servants, assumed on this occasion that indescribable swing in his gait which belongs to all Mussulman fops of the lower order, and which can only be conceived by such as may have seen it.

Babouk had been aware that his enemy, the nurse, had been endeavouring to get a schoolmaster for her mistress, and had failed in her purpose, and it was therefore no small triumph to this amiable little man, to think how nicely he was increasing his own adherents, and preventing her from enlarging her party.

The residence stood in an extensive enclosure, encompassed with a high wall and a hedge of *jeyt* on the western side of the house. The ground was laid out in grass, and sprinkled over with trees, the fragrant *babool* there, in the cold season, shed its odours from its small blossoms, resembling golden balls; the *parkinsonia*, too, spread abroad her feathered branches; the pomegranate also was there with her dark green leaves and scarlet blossoms; while the *oleander*, the white and red jessamine of Persia, and the rose, scattered their fragrance in every breeze. At the back of the house was a garden for fruit and culinary herbs, intersected with straight walks in right angles. This garden was delicately kept, and enriched with the fruits and vegetables of almost every climate.

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Beyond this enclosure, and cut off from it by a wall, were the servants' houses and stables, ranged on each side of a long narrow yard, the small houses being attached to the wall on each side, and covered with tiles. Few of these houses contained more than one room, where was a clay range for pots, a four-footed bed, laced with common cord, and a few earthen or brass pans or pots, an iron spoon, and a stone for grinding corn.

In each of these dwellings lived a family, a set of *bearers*, or perhaps one or two single men; and it was the master's order, that every inhabitant of this small community should keep that part of the little *compound* clean opposite his own door, and, moreover, that each household should keep themselves quiet, and not interfere with their neighbours' affairs,—two commands which were always observed at such times as the master might be expected to direct his steps towards that quarter of his domains, though wholly disregarded at all other times; for there are, perhaps, few persons on earth who better understand the duties and observances which are included in what we term *eye-service* than the natives of our oriental dominions.

It was precisely at the period when the greater part of the inhabitants of this little polity were preparing their morning meal, that the footman, the pedler, and the schoolmaster, followed by a dozen or more of Hindoo and Mussulman boys, among whom were only two tunics, three pair of trousers, and two *turbans*, the rest of the little group having no other coverings to boast than a small piece of cloth girt round about their loins, and a scull-cap, entered in triumph into the *compound*, for the double purpose of showing themselves to the inhabitants, and of proceeding with more decorum in their march up to the residence.

The bustle which the company made immediately brought all the inmates of the houses into the yard.

The tailor laid aside the lady's gown, which he had been carefully plaiting, and looked up without moving from the ground on which he was sitting. The laundress put her head out of the low door, and looked anxiously to the quarter from whence the alarm proceeded. The coachman crept out of some corner of the coach-house, where he had contrived to light a little charcoal fire to cook his rice, at the hazard of burning off the wheels of the carriage. Four or five stout fierce-looking

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bearers appeared at another door. The sweeper and his wife, with three or four dirty uncombed children, were visible in another corner; and sundry labourers, boys, and runners came pouring from the garden; while a smart young footman, the colleague of the little consequential dwarf so often spoken of before, proceeded from some other quarter,—all these being attracted by the oracular address of Babouk, who was directing the schoolmaster how best to manage his affairs with the lady. Many of the company thus assembled now advanced towards the newly-arrived party, and had scarcely begun to question the footman on the occasion of his appearing with such attendance, when the nurse, who had been regaling herself with her pipe after the fatigues of dressing her lady, suddenly appeared before her own door, standing erect, and swelling at the triumph of her enemy with indignation, which, for a moment, was too strong for utterance.

This nurse had served the lady many years, and had brought up several of her children; and although she had in reality no one good moral quality, yet she had considerable influence with her lady, and had hitherto had sufficient power, on various occasions, to procure the dismissal of several servants, and the establishment of others in their place.

For these reasons, she possessed great authority in the *compound*, and had also found means to increase her own income considerably, as she was always careful to lay her contributions on every servant for whom she procured a place. These contributions she never forgot to levy every pay-day; and when any of her subjects failed to bring the customary tribute, she considered such as rebels, and never ceased her machinations till she got them turned out of their places. Hence she was an object of great terror to most of the poor creatures within her influence.

This nurse was a tall, sallow-looking, hard-featured woman, but from ease and good-living excessively corpulent. Her hair was somewhat grizzled with age; her ears were large, and so laden with golden rings as to stand out from her head like those of a bat; her throat was large and fat, and covered with jewels of silver; she wore a thin muslin jacket, having short sleeves and a wide border of silk, with a very full striped petticoat from the looms of Benares. The interior of her mouth

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and lips were blood-red from the juice of the betel-nut, and her arms and ankles were cased in rings of silver.

Such was the female who now stepped forward, flaming with indignation, and was followed from the dark recess of her cabin by a woman, who, to judge by her wrinkles and haggard expression, might have been supposed to be, at least, ninety years of age, though, probably, we might with truth deduct thirty from the number. This poor wretch was at once the slave and counsellor of the nurse, and by her miserable appearance, having only a ragged petticoat and a coarse sheet to cover her whole person, seemed to be a living monument of the miserable lot of those who are doomed to be servants of servants.

CHAPTER III.

Whether Babouk was ignorant of the storm which was approaching him in the form of the nurse, or whether he was valiantly resolved to await it, does not appear; but certain it is, that he stood holding counsel with his companions till the duenna began to pour upon him her whole stock of abuse, using every violent and opprobrious expression which the Hindostanee language can supply, and telling him that it should be her endeavour, not only to procure the dismissal of the miserable old man whom he had dared to introduce as a schoolmaster, but of himself also, although he presumed so deeply on the favour of his mistress.

The little footman was not a man to stand still and be abused without attempting something in his own vindication; he therefore turned round, and eying his adversary from head to foot, bade her interfere with him at her peril.

On this, the amazon, seizing him by the shoulders, fairly turned him round with his face to the market-place, at the same time dexterously contriving that his turban should fall off, and roll into some of the various slops and gutters which were before the door of each house. This was the signal for a general battle; the little man roared stoutly, and the partisans on either

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side, ranging themselves around their chieftains, began to deal their blows on each other, with a noise and uproar which might not unaptly be compared to the howling of so many jackalls.

How long this strife might have continued does not appear, if it had not been interrupted in the way I am about to describe. Precisely at the moment in which the contest raged with greatest violence, a native of respectable appearance, and evidently bearing about him the marks of opulence, suddenly entered the little *compound* by the way of the market. He was an elderly stout-looking man, with a fine open countenance, and with such a head of crisp and curling gray hair as seldom adorns the crown of age. His dress, in all respects, was like that of other natives of distinction, excepting that he wore a pair of high-topped boots, according to the European fashion.

The history of this singular person was as follows.—He was educated as a *byraggee*, or begging *dervis*, in which character he had travelled over great part of India. During these his travels, he met with the works of the satirical poet Cubbeer, who formerly resided at Benares. In the works of this Cubbeer, who seems to have been a facetious deist, he found the absurdities of the Mahometan and Hindoo religions, and certain inconsistencies remarkable in the manners of the Christians, set forth without regard to decency, or respect to persons of any denomination; and although in these writings the Europeans were by no means so severely lashed as their neighbours, it was rather under the idea that they were generally without religion, than that their religion was any better than that of their fellow-men. By these poems the mind of Munghool Doss, for such was the name of the person in question, had been thoroughly unsettled; yet it is evident that his thoughts were still continually much exercised on the subject of religion.

When the Mahrattas had obtained the command of the Doaub, after the defeat of Gholaum Kauder, a *dewaun*, or collector of tribute under Scindiah, and a follower of Cubbeer, patronised Munghool Doss, and granted him a portion of land, on which he built a house, small but substantial, not very far from Merut, where he was allowed to remain even after the Mahrattas had left the country, and the English had taken possession. He was then in good circumstances, and under the Europeans

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enjoyed the comforts of a peaceable and orderly government; for, before the arrival of the English in that part of India, murders were so common that it was scarcely thought necessary to inquire into them.

In the mean time, though prosperous in outward matters, the poor man, feeling that he was advancing in years, became more and more uneasy respecting the concerns of his soul; and remembering that Cubbeer had spoken somewhat more respectfully of the English than of any other description of persons, he resolved to apply to some European for his advice, and accordingly introduced himself to the English judge at Merut, a person in high office, and asked him if he could instruct him in the Christian faith. But it happened that this *Gallio cared for none of these things*, and satisfied himself by giving a present of money to him who came to seek of him the bread of life.

Thus the poor *byraggee*, being repulsed and disappointed, returned unsatisfied to his own house, having divided the silver which had been given to him among the servants of the judge. After this, one or more years passed away, while the unhappy man still continued to grope through the darkness in which he had been educated. At length, meeting with a pious writer in the city of Merut, he was directed by him to the gentleman of whom much has been said above, and arrived just at the crisis of the battle between the pigmies and the cranes; or, in other words, at the precise moment in which the indignant nurse was about to make the unfortunate Babouk more intimate with the dust than a man of so much consequence might altogether wish to become.

"Whaw! whaw!" said the *byraggee*, as he entered within the sphere of action, and marched forward between the combatants, calling aloud on two stout porters, who were standing by enjoying the scene, and asking them if they, who were hired to defend their master, and keep the peace in his family, were not ashamed to allow such doings; adding, "Show me to your master, and I will presently let him know to what sort of persons he intrusts his concerns."

In a moment all was hushed at the voice of the *byraggee*, who on this occasion had, unknown to himself, taken up somewhat of the authoritative tone of his old profession, for there are few more determined and daring

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characters in India than the wandering *dervises*, or the Hindoo *fakeers*; and while his eye was fixed on the little footman, who was arranging his ruffled plumes, smoothing his shock head, and shaking the dust from his turban, all the other servants had disappeared like so many rabbits in a warren, each having taken shelter in his own burrow; and none were left in the *compound* but Alfoo, the schoolmaster and his scholars, the little dwarf, and the two porters, who stood prepared with all due obsequiousness to conduct the stranger gentleman to their master, though not without some consideration respecting the fees which they hoped to receive for this service.

Thus quiet was suddenly restored after this violent storm, and all remained tranquil more than an hour after the *byraggee* had proceeded to the house, at which time the master himself appeared, with a *bearer* carrying a large parasol over his head, and in his train he brought the *byraggee* (carrying under his arm a copy of the Holy Scriptures, which had been presented to him by the Christian gentleman with whom he had been conversing), a respectable-looking native doctor, the schoolmaster and his boys, the pedler, the *sirdah-bearer*, two or three porters, one or two runners, and sundry other idle personages, who were eager to see the teaching.

The gentleman marched forward till he came to the door of a large shed, which had hitherto been kept unoccupied, to the infinite disturbance of many in the yard, who would willingly have appropriated it to their own service.

This shed he ordered to be fitted up with mats, and to be further screened from the sun by an awning of coarse cloth, and informed the schoolmaster that it was to be for his own use, and that of the doctor, who was to inspect his labours with the boys; and having apprized him that he should supply him with books and slates, and should examine the children every day, he called the *byraggee*, and walked with him back to the garden, where he was building a little chapel for the use of those who wished to meet and serve their God, there being no place of divine worship in the station.

The situation of this chapel was cool and airy, and the humble building was encircled by the most fragrant flowers. It was nearly finished at the time of which we are speaking, and it was in order that he might tempt

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the *byraggee* to come to the opening of this little place of worship on the next Sabbath-day, that the gentleman took the old man to see the simple altar which he had erected in the wilderness.

The *byraggee* gladly accepted this invitation; and it must be recorded, that it was in this place that the poor man first joined in the public worship of the God of the Christians, and that here he first heard the name of Jehovah, and became acquainted with the great work of man's salvation, and the glorious co-operation of the three Persons of the Trinity in this mighty work.

I was told by one who was present at the time when the *byraggee* was baptized by a Christian minister of the Church of England, in this little chapel, one who heard the song of praise (which seemed as it were to lift the very roof of the humble building) raised on the occasion by certain pious and humble soldiers of the regiment to which the master was attached, that it was impossible to conceive any sight more touching than that which offered itself when the minister lifted up the white hairs from the brow of the venerable old man, in order to sprinkle thereon the water of baptism. But to return to my history, which, if it has few other recommendations, has this at least to say for itself, that it is, for the most part, a true and faithful narrative of events which actually took place at a period not very remote.

The arrangement of the school-house, or *muchtub khanna*, and the establishment of Mootee Ram and his boys in their new and honourable situation, took place at sunrise the next day, so that the master and the lady were regaled as they sat at breakfast, at seven o'clock in the morning, in the inner apartment of the house, with the murmur of many young voices repeating the alphabet and the vowel points, in tones so loud and dissonant, as nothing but the distance could have rendered tolerable to any other ear but that of a Christian.

At mid-day, Mootee Ram, according to orders, brought the children up to the house, to be examined by the master and the doctor, at which time the scholars were put in classes, furnished with books and slates, and the doctor directed to give the best scholars such instructions as the old schoolmaster was not found fit for; the schoolmaster was also admonished at the same time to bring up his boys every day at eight o'clock to the house, in order that they might hear the Old Testa-

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ment read aloud by the doctor, in presence of the master, the lady, and all the servants.

Thus a system of education was established in this place, of a very superior kind to any thing which had ever before existed there among the natives, and a means provided for illuminating, in some degree, the minds of the poor children, without any *actual* direct attempt being used for their conversion.

Among the scholars of Mootee Ram, Arzoomund, the son of Alfoo, was, without exception, the most promising boy. He was remarkably tall for his age, and had a fine set of features, with dark and brilliant eyes; his hair curled naturally, and was allowed to appear, untortured by art, from beneath his turban. Though bred in the very hotbed of vice and dissimulation of every kind, and too well acquainted with practical wickedness, he had been as yet restrained from sinking into those depths of depravity into which most children in India usually fall long before his age.

It is rather difficult to say how he had been preserved from these deep and deadly sins, unless we suppose that there was a certain restraining grace which held him back—a grace which is often exercised for those who know it not, and by which many are led safely through dark and dangerous paths, till at length they are brought into a way where their feet stand sure, and the light of life is open before them.

One of the means which had been used by Providence to save this boy from the contamination of sin was a degree of natural vivacity, very rare in the East. He was remarkably active, full of play, and fond of those amusements which exercise the body; and though he now and then got involved in a broil, and came off with a broken head and bloody nose, yet he contrived to be a general favourite with his schoolfellows, having little sulkiness of temper, and nothing of a spirit of revenge.

The master soon found that this boy was above the instructions of Mootee Ram: he therefore placed him under the especial charge of his own doctor; and the boy, in consequence, was soon enabled to read his own language with fluency, and to begin to read Persian—a qualification of which the natives in general think a great deal. In the mean time the boy was gleaning many new and valuable ideas respecting history and geography, together with the depravity of man's heart,

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and other Scriptural doctrines. The First Book of Moses has great interest for the inhabitants of India of most denominations, and the master took care that some of the most important lessons contained in the first few chapters of Genesis should not be lost upon those poor heathens who were under his influence, though he did not at present judge it prudent to say much to them on those subjects more immediately relative to the Messiah.

In the mean time the chapel had been opened, and divine service was performed in it, in the Hindostanee language, three or four times a week. And though Arzoomund would on no account be seen in the chapel, yet he not unfrequently stole to the door when it was dusk, and stood listening to what was passing within, having been at first attracted by some old Hindostanee harmonies which the converted natives had set to the songs of Zion.

On these occasions the sound of the clear Gospel more than once reached his ear, and from thence, with the Divine blessing, found its way to his heart, though at that time he was far from acknowledging the convictions which he felt. He however grew shy of joining in the religious festivals and ceremonies of the Hindoos, and was often found on the days of their most joyous festivities in a corner of his school-room with his friend the doctor, whom he consulted on all matters of literature, and by whom he had been induced to believe that the world was a globe, hanging in the heavens without apparent support, and that the Mosaic account of the creation was certainly more true than that which is given by the Hindoos, who assert that the earth was produced by certain genii, or demigods, who for that purpose churned the ocean, and produced the earth with all things contained therein.

After the master had been at Merut about two years, he introduced the Gospel of St. Matthew into his school, which the boys read without any scruple, and thus became acquainted with the name of Christ, and the purport of his coming to earth, namely, to remove the curse, by fulfilling his Father's will, and undergoing the penalty which man had incurred. It happened that, some months before this precious volume was introduced into the school, Arzoomund had found that copy of St. Matthew's Gospel which had been given by the lady to his father on the occasion which we have men

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tioned before; and taking it from the dusty hiding-place into which his father had thrown it, although he dared not produce it, or inform his father that he had found it, yet he read many chapters of it by himself.

When, therefore, it became a class-book, he obtained much credit for the readiness with which he was able to decipher it: and from that period the youth took great delight in reading it aloud to any one who would hear him.

CHAPTER IV.

It was about this period that a certain converted native, who understood his Bible well, and had great gifts of utterance, came to see the master, and to preach and read in the chapel. On this occasion many who were not Christians went to hear him, and among these were the doctor, with his favourite Arzoomund.

This celebrated native preacher took some part of the 34th of Ezekiel whereon to enlarge, and on this occasion he set forth the whole scheme of God's dealings with man, in such language, and under such a form, as was peculiarly agreeable to all his native auditors. He first spoke of the nature of God, and proved by reason that there could not be two all-powerful and all-knowing beings existing at once, inasmuch as, supposing that there were two, the omnipotence and omniscience of the one must necessarily interfere with that of the other: he next proceeded to speak of the mysterious doctrine of the Trinity, viz. of the three in one—a doctrine which he stated as being above man's capacity, though necessary to be believed in order to man's salvation; and he further proceeded to show that the glorious One in Three, to wit, the Lord Jehovah, having resolved to create man, and being able, in virtue of his omniscience, to see that he would surely fall into sin through the delusions of Satan working on the weakness of his nature, had formed the purpose of saving him from the consequences of his sin, by providing such a remedy as omnipotence only could create, and boundless mercy only could apply.

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He then fully stated the various offices which these blessed persons of the Trinity had assigned to themselves in this work of man's salvation, hence taking occasion to magnify the love of the Father for perishing sinners, the obedience of the Son in submitting to the Father's will, and the various works of the Holy Spirit, whereby the fallen creature is *first* chosen, *then* regenerated, *then* sanctified, and afterward glorified.

The preacher then proceeded to show how, in the chapter before him, all the human race were compared to sheep, *for the flock of my pasture are men, saith the Lord my God*—to sheep without shepherds, wandering over dark hills, and under a cloudy atmosphere, wounded, desolate, and defenceless, and knowing not their home, or their real shepherd, or their own pasture-ground, unacquainted with their origin, and forgetful of the paradise in which the original stock first dwelt in harmony and holy love.

He then pointed out the shepherd, even Christ, or the beloved, who had promised in the latter days to come again and gather his sheep into one fold, to heal their sicknesses, and bind up their wounds, and set them in a fair and large pasture, where showers of blessings pouring upon them should make them forget their past sufferings, and the days of their long wanderings and many sorrows.

The preacher then proceeded to remark, that it was the voice of the true Shepherd which was now calling to those present, through the medium of his holy Word; and he proceeded to describe the rest which in the latter days should be given to all those who, having heard and obeyed the call, had died in the faith of Christ, and had been willing to take hold of the words of promise.

This exhortation was concluded by a description of the Sabbath, or rest, which is to take place before the final consummation of all things, "in which," said he, "all ye, the children of Japhet, of Shem, and of Ham, all men of every complexion and of every degree, shall be united in the spiritual Ark, and, having escaped the great water-floods, shall be landed in a new earth, blooming as a Paradise, and gushing with fountains of living water, where there will be no noxious beasts to devour the lambs of the flock, and no burning winds or scorching sunbeams to desolate the earth."

This was the substance of the preacher's discourse;

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and it was followed by a lovely hymn, addressed to the Redeemer, and set to one of those soft and delightful Indian melodies, of which persons can have little notion who have never heard them sung by those whose ears and voices have been accustomed to them from infancy.

Arzoomund had stood during the whole of the discourse, with his arms folded, and his eyes fixed on the speaker; and when the orator had ceased, he started as from a dream, and turning to the doctor, who was near him, "What are we to think of this?" he said; "is all this true?"

The doctor made no reply to this question, but bade him be silent till the hymn was finished. This being concluded, the Christians present addressed themselves to prayer, on which the doctor quitted the chapel, and all the Mussulmans and Hindoos followed him, drawing Arzoomund away with them in the crowd, many of them breaking out into blasphemies as soon as they were fairly out of hearing of those in the chapel.

This evening, when the young Hindoo had reached his home, which never appeared to him more dark, solitary, or miserable than at that time, he found his father sitting alone in the inner apartment, in a meditative mood.

"Come in, Arzoomund," he said, "and shut the door; I have something to say to you of importance. May I confide in you?"

"I hope so, my father," said the young man; "I am now in my seventeenth year."

"And you have found me always a good father?" said Alfoo.

"I have," said the youth: "you have done well by me; and if you will now tell me what troubles you, I will assist you to the utmost of my power."

"Well, then," said Alfoo, "I will speak, and unload my mind of a heavy burden. I have a father still living. I heard of him by accident, of a travelling man, a few days since, and he is very old and poor!"

"A father!" repeated Arzoomund, "and you never told me, and he is old and poor! Oh! let us go to him, and bring him to our home! Oh! my father, how could you forsake him so long?"

"I have done wrong," replied Alfoo, "very wrong; but I am now willing to do what I can to repair the injury; are you willing to go with me to Almora, where

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he lives, and where I was born, and to assist me in bringing the old man to this place!"

Arzoomund instantly professed his readiness to accompany his father, and it was settled that they should depart together in three days, Alfoo requiring so much time to arrange his affairs, and place his possessions in secure hands.

The next morning Arzoomund went to the mistress, and requested from her several copies of St. Matthew's Gospel, to carry with him on a journey he was about to take.

The lady gave him two copies, which were all she had by her, but asked no questions; and the young man, without saying one word to his father, added these to such little stores as he had provided for his journey: these stores consisted of parched pease, a cup, a few rice cakes, and some other small matters, which were all to be placed in a wallet, to be slung over his back.

Alfoo's affairs, being in small compass, were soon settled, and on the day which had been previously fixed, before the shades of night had passed away, the travellers proceeded towards Almora. The morning was fine, and the air deliciously cool as they entered on the long sandy plain which extended itself between Merut and the house of our old friend the *byraggee*, under whose hospitable roof they proposed to spend their first night; for the *byraggee* had built many porches for the reception of travellers, and he had more than once testified such regard for Arzoomund, that the youth doubted not of being received with every mark of hospitality which a Hindoo is willing to admit from a Christian.

As they passed along, Arzoomund asked his father many questions respecting his grandfather and the place of his parents' nativity: and finding his father in an unusually kind and gentle mood, he took the occasion to speak to him of many things which he had learned in the family of the master, and gave him a very clear and correct outline of the discourse which he had heard some days since.

The father and son were in a wide plain, over which the beams of the morning shot in long bright lines, partially illuminating some parts of the purple heath, and leaving others in comparative shade. The light, however, was sufficiently clear to enable Alfoo to ascertain that there was no one within hearing before he replied:

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notwithstanding which, he was not so much assured that he was quite alone, but that he judged it best to speak low, while he made the following reply:—"Son," he said, "be assured that there is not a word which is contained in that book of the *Feringhees* which is not true."

"How!" said Arzoomund, looking at his father.

The pedler put his finger to the side of his nose, as if to reprove his son for the loud accent in which he had spoken, and then added, though in a lower voice, "Yes, my son, I believe from my heart that much, if not all they say, is true; and that the time will come when all mankind will be of one religion, and that religion will be the religion of Christ."

"You believe it!" cried the son; "and why, then, are you not a Christian?"

Alfoo looked at his son with an expression of ineffable contempt, by which it might be inferred that he thought him little better than a fool, and then said, "What for am I to lose *caste*, and cease to eat bread?"

"What for?" said the son; "why, in order that you may make sure of heaven."

The father made no reply, for at that moment a murmur of very distant voices came whispering through the breeze; but starting back, and commanding his son, as he valued his blessing, to refrain from speaking of what had passed between them, began to mend his pace, and the travellers arrived presently afterward at the summit of a little rising ground, and saw before them, in the north-east, forming a strong outline on the horizon, which was beginning to glow with a saffron hue, a *dirgah*, or Mussulman tomb.

This edifice was considerably raised above the plain, on a platform of stone, having a flat roof, supported by pillars, through which the rays of the morning shot so directly that the travellers were enabled to distinguish several figures within, gathered round a large sarcophagus in the centre of the building. In the front of the *dirgah* were a porch and a flight of steps, and at the four corners were small turrets, surmounted by cupolas.

At the sight of this building and its living inmates, Alfoo, whose head was full of the treason he had just uttered, started, and was half inclined to turn back; but observing that there was a long cluster of bushes on the shadowy side of the building, he proposed that

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they should keep to the west of these, not doubting but that they might pass wholly unnoticed by the people in the *dirgah*.

They accordingly crossed over towards the bushes, while yet at some distance, and sheltered by these, they were presently secured from the observation of the persons in the tomb, though it was necessary for them to come so near that they could not but hear something of what was passing among these midnight revellers, for such they appeared to be.

It seems that these persons had been engaged in some deed of darkness, in which robbery was connected with murder, and the dark and unconnected sentences which they uttered intimated both these crimes. Neither was Alfoo unacquainted with the individuals whose voices reached his ear, and whose persons became visible as he crept along the bushes and peeped through their openings towards the tomb.

These persons consisted of two stout *fakeers*,* well known in the cantonments of Merut, an old woman, and two young ones, who maintained themselves by going from house to house to sing and dance.

Alfoo and his son knew too well the character of these people to suppose that there could be much safety in their neighbourhood, especially as it might be possible that there were others of the party at hand, though they saw them not; they therefore crept softly, bending themselves almost to the ground, till they were considerably past the *dirgah*, and then, mending their speed till the light of day blazed full upon the heath, they beheld the tomb considerably behind them in the south, and about ten o'clock the travellers came to a little village, where they procured some refreshment, and enjoyed some rest.

After the sun began to decline from his meridian height, the father and son renewed their journey, and a short time afterward arrived at the house of Munghoo Doss, where Arzoomund no sooner made himself known than the master of the house came out to meet him, and commanded that Arzoomund and his father should be supplied with provision necessary for their refreshment.

* The fakeers are wandering beggars, who pretend to the possession of sanctity.

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CHAPTER V.

Some weeks had elapsed since the *byraggee* had visited Merut: he was therefore desirous of knowing all that was passing there among his friends, and much pleased to hear the account which Arzoomund was enabled to give him respecting the exhortation which he had chanced to hear.

The copy of the Scriptures which the master had given to the *byraggee* was lying by his side, in a silk cover, on the carpet where he was sitting; and no sooner did Arzoomund mention the chapter from which the discourse had been taken, than the old man turned to it, and read it aloud, talking to himself, and, as it were, reasoning with himself as he went along; and this he did in a manner which would have placed a refined English audience, however serious, in a strait between the inclination to laughter, natural to the nation, and a restraining sense of the sacredness of the subject. But the Hindoos are not a laughing people, and those who know them best frequently remark of them, that nothing excites them to mirth but sin; a sort of merriment which we wish were restrained to heathens only.

"And so," said the *byraggee*, 'I am to understand that this beautiful chapter is a picture of the latter days, when the evil beast shall cease from the land, and men shall dwell quietly in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods? The Almighty grant that these days may come quickly, for Heaven only knows how far the state of this poor country is from the peace and security which is here described!"

Alfoo made no answer, for the scene of the *dirgah* was present with him, and Arzoomund was restrained from speaking what was in his mind by the presence of his father.

The conversation then took another turn, and the *byraggee* showed his visiters some iron rings which were affixed in the cement of the roof, at regular dis-

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tances. "These rings," said the old man, "I caused to be placed as you see, because, when I built this house, I had an idea in my own mind that some European gentleman might come to visit me, and pitch his tent on the roof of my house; and thus you see that I am prepared to do the *Feringhee** gentleman honour whenever he may choose to come."

"It appears, then," said Alfoo, "that you thought much of the *Feringhees* before they came into the neighbourhood?"

"I have long thought," replied the *byraggee*, "that the truth was among them, though I have seen many, and heard of more, whose lives do not answer to their principles."

Alfoo and his son, being now called to the refreshment of supper, took their leave of their host with all due courtesy, not expecting to see him in the morning. They were, however, mistaken, for Alfoo, having spent some hours of the night in carousing with some of his own *caste* in one of the lodges, slept late, and was not on foot again till the sun was considerably above the horizon, while Arzoomund rose early, having made the best of his time by immediately retiring to sleep.

On the borders of a tank in front of the house they therefore met the *byraggee*, who was returning from his morning ride on a small pony, accoutred according to the Hindoo fashion, with various tassels and bells, which make a curious jingling and rustling as the creature ambles along.

The *byraggee* expressed some surprise at seeing his visiters of the night before, and asked them how they had liked their fare, assuring them that he should be very glad to give them a night's lodging on their return. "And then," added he, addressing Arzoomund, "we will have some further conversation respecting the Book of the Christians."

Thus the *byraggee* parted from his guests, and the travellers went on towards a village which they had seen the night before from the roof of the house in which they had lodged. They proceeded without encountering any adventure, till coming near the village,

* *Feringhee* means literally Frank, or French; but it is used in the East to signify any European.

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to a place where there had been some kind of old building, which was then deserted, the tall and stout figure of a *fakeer* appeared issuing through the doorway of the ruin.

This man, from constant exposure to the sun, was unusually black. He was without other clothing than a piece of cloth about his loins; his beard was exceedingly long, reaching over his breast; his hair thick, uncombed, and standing on end with oil and dust; various white and yellow figures were painted on his nose, cheeks, and forehead, and long lines of white were traced upon his body, in shapes answering to his ribs, and giving to this part of his figure, at a little distance, the precise similitude of a skeleton. In his hand he had a large knotted staff, and a wallet was suspended at his back.

Alfoo rather started at his sudden appearance, and stood for a moment half doubtful what his purpose might be; on which the other burst into a loud and dissonant laugh, and asked him if he did not recollect his old friend Ram Cookoo.

"Ram Cookoo!" said the other, suddenly recollecting an old acquaintance, "what! my brother and friend, of dishonest memory, who played the hypocrite so well, and obtained the confidence so completely of my old master, at Dinapore, eighteen years ago! and do I now see him converted into a stout *fakeer?* Well, be it so, and happy be this meeting!"

The two friends then took hands, according to the custom of these people when they would seem particularly loving, and beguiled the way by informing each other respecting their present situations and purposes; from which it appeared that Ram Cookoo, after having encountered many adventures, none of which had been particularly creditable, was at that time performing the part of a holy man on the hill beyond the village, where he had a hut near to a small temple, and that his wants were so amply supplied by the villagers, that it was in his power to give his friend and his son a repast of all that is most inviting and relishing to a Hindoo palate.

To add a further temptation to Alfoo to stay at least for a night at his hut, Ram Cookoo stated that there was to be a great feast that night on a certain annual occasion, and that the village would be all alive, and every

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inhabitant thereof as much to be envied as the blessed in the Mahometan paradise.

"I see," replied Alfoo, smiling, "that you have not laid aside your tone of raillery, my brother."

"And why should I among friends?" said the *fakeer*; "it is not every day that I meet with one to whom I dare show my real face."

By the time that Alfoo and Ram Cookoo had told such parts of their stories as they chose to impart to each other, they had come to the entrance of the village, which consisted of low huts forming one long straggling street, the farther end of which was somewhat elevated above the rest, and touched upon the mount where stood the habitation of the *fakeer*. This street was more than usually crowded by persons who had assembled from the neighbourhood to enjoy the festivity; and the boards of the little shops were covered with sugar-plums, cakes, and sweetmeats, mixed up with clarified butter. Garlands of flowers were also suspended in attractive bunches in many places, and there was a kind of holyday glee evident on many countenances, forming a disagreeable contrast with vice in some, and with the habitual traces of wretchedness in others.

As the *fakeer* strode through the crowd, followed by the friends he had picked up, the population gave way as to a superior, and certain old women pronounced him blessed as he brushed by them, putting the backs of their hands to the sides of their faces, and cracking every joint of their fingers with a loud report.

In the mean time, the *fakeer* passed on, followed by Alfoo and his son, till he had left the market-place behind him, and was come out upon the little hill, where a high grove offered a cooling shade, and a greensward a place of rest.

Onward marched the Hindoo saint, and presently brought his followers within view of a little open building or temple, erected on a square platform of stone, and having in its centre a sitting figure of a demon, which was like a man only in its monstrous face, its lower parts resembling a large egg. Near this building was a miserable hut, the door of which was not much higher than a person creeping in on his hands and knees.

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"There," said the *fakeer*, pointing to the idol, "there is my master, and I assure you that his service is at once easy and profitable. I go and come at my own pleasure, and my master never calls me to account, and yet I have abundant wages, and far more to eat than I can consume, although," added he, laughing, "I am not a man to live on parched grain, or to assuage my thirst with the dew of heaven."

So saying, Ram Cookoo strode forward to the door of his house, and, having opened it, invited his friends to come in; or, if they liked it better, to sit down without, while he should bring forth such things as might be requisite for preparing a good meal.

Alfoo and his son chose what they considered the best part of the house, even that to which a bad wife is entitled, to wit, the outside, and there, stretching themselves on the grass, waited the re-appearance of the *fakeer*.

It was not long before he came out, bearing with him an earthen oven or fireplace, a large pan or pot, a bag of rice, and a whole kid, ready killed and flayed, and in a state to be cut up, which having set down, he went in again and brought out some other matters requisite for making a savoury *curry*.*

All these things being prepared, with wood for his fire, he sat down very deliberately to cut up the kid, to grind the rice, and to perform his other culinary operations, without any other cooking-utensils than a coarse case-knife, a grinding stone, and a wooden spoon. And while he was thus employed, he entered into discourse with his companions.

After having related some of his former exploits, and described certain narrow escapes from the hand of justice, in which he seemed to glory not a little, he began to question Arzoomund on his plans of life, and the manner in which he had been bred.

"He has had a good education," replied Alfoo; "few young men of his age can read better."

"Indeed!" said the *fakeer*, "and what is he to gain by that? I do not know that I ever got so much as a dinner for all my learning."

"You can read, then?" said Arzoomund.

* *Curry*; a species of thick broth or pottage, highly seasoned with spices, &c.

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"And why not?" returned the *fakeer*; "I can read books and men too, and I tell you that the latter is a much more profitable branch of study than the former."

"I don't know how you can prove that," returned the son of Alfoo; "I have a notion that there is one book in the world which, well studied, would bring more profit than all the earth has to give."

"Hold your tongue, son," exclaimed Alfoo, "what is it you would be saying now?"

"Let him speak," returned Ram Cookoo, "I know what he would say. Did I not see you this morning coming out of the gates of that Christian dog who was once no better than I am now, a begging dervis, and one who lived by lies and theft? and I have a shrewd guess that this man, or some one of the same sort, has been tampering with your son, and filling his head with some of the *Feringhee* lies; but let him at any rate speak his mind. What passes among friends should not be repeated, and if I have not had any concealments with you, why should you have any with me? it little matters to me what a man thinks, so long as he keeps appearances among the vulgar herd. To speak the plain truth, all religions seem alike to me, one mass of absurdities and lies—but surely I am not the man to awaken those who are asleep, when my very bread depends on their sleeping still!"

"Well, but," said Arzoomund, "surely a man of your sense cannot class all religions together, or cannot pretend that there is no such a thing as true religion? Is it possible that you can look at the wonders and beauties of creation, and say that these never had a Maker?"

"No," replied the *fakeer*, "I know that there is a God, a great and mighty God, but I know no more of him; and I believe that all those are liars who pretend to know more than I do."

"You believe, then," returned Arzoomund, "that there is a God, a Father and Creator of all things; why then is it impossible that this God should have revealed his will to his creatures in some mode or manner to be received by the senses, either by word or vision, or by signs and symbols?"

The *fakeer*, who had hitherto seemed to feel that he was talking with one quite beneath him in intellect, suddenly looked up and fixed his large penetrating eyes on the young man, and then answered, "I see no reason

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why he may not have done what you say, but where are we to find this revelation of the Divine will? would you find it among the lying legends and absurdities of those who worship a thing like that?" pointing to the idol,—"or in the so much vaunted book of the Mussulmans, who have set up a man, a sinful man like ourselves, to worship?—or in the incomprehensible mysteries of the *Feringhees*, many of whom, I verily believe, have just as much religion as the stone on which I grind my rice?"

"There are many bad Christians," returned Arzoomund, "and as to the Hindoos and Mussulmans, you know more of them than I do; but yet," he added, "if there was not such a thing as one good Christian through all India, I still am inclined to say that the book of the Christians is the right book, and all the rest the wrong ones."

"And why so?" said the *fakeer*.

"Because," replied Arzoomund, "any man living up to the rules laid down in that book, and having that faith which should enable him to walk in the road there marked out, would be an angel, not a man; and if you can say as much of the books of the Hindoos or of the Mussulmans, I give up my argument, and you are right, and I am wrong."

"Well done, my brave youth," said the *fakeer*, "well said, and boldly too, for how did you know but that I should take up this knife and strike it into your Christian heart, when you uttered your opinion thus daringly. It is well, however, that you have fallen in with a liberal, free-hearted man; you are here at liberty to say what you will, and think what you will. I have seen the world, and lived with all sorts of men, and have thrown away all prejudices. But take my advice; don't be broaching these sentiments in all companies, unless you wish to have your skin pulled over your ears."

Alfoo looked grave on hearing all this, but Arzoomund, little daunted, took one of his books from his wallet, and begged Ram Cookoo to convey it into his.

"Let me see it first," said the *fakeer*. "Well and good; I can read it like a priest; it may serve me a good turn when I have lived here as long as I choose, and wish to shift my skin. I have heard of some of the *Feringhees* being mightily pleased with a poor Hindoo who could produce a book of this kind out of his bag on

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occasion, and recite a verse or two in an audible voice, Who knows but this little volume may do me a service, when all other helps fail?"

"Who knows?" said Arzoomund, smiling, "Perhaps a man might have a worse friend in time of need than the Bible."

"How long," said Alfoo, in high displeasure at his son, "how long is thy fool's tongue to go on at this rate? let me tell thee, son, that if I thought thee in earnest in all this nonsense, I would use thee in such a manner that the very crows and jackals should refuse to feed on thee!"

"Pshaw!" said the *fakeer*, "let the boy prate, it is only to show his learning; the time is past in which men of sense are to be persuaded out of their reason by Brahmins and priests. And now," he added, "stand aside—keep at your distance; remember that I am a saint, and do not let any of the villagers see us eating out of one dish." So saying, he made two circles on the grass at some distance from each other, and having filled two large dishes of rice and *curry* for his guests, he took his own meal apart, from time to time inhaling certain draughts from his brass cup, which might have passed for the produce of a pure rivulet that ran gurgling down from the higher points of the hill, at no great distance from the hut, had not the brown flush on his dark features, and the increasing fire in his eye, led to the suspicion that somewhat else had crept into the cup of the saint besides the pure dew of heaven.

The whole of the kid and the greater part of two immense dishes of rice had disappeared before Ram Cookoo and his visiters, and the crows had been supplied with what was left in the dishes, when Arzoomund, seeing his father and his host disposing themselves for their afternoon nap, and not finding in himself much inclination to sleep, rose up and told his father that he had a mind to explore the country a little, and would be back by sunset.

Alfoo, who was already half asleep, nodded assent to this proposition, and Arzoomund immediately passed on into the grove which was on the brow of the hill, and, going through it, presently came into a dingle formed on the other side by a second hill; this dingle was deep, shadowy, and uninterrupted by any sound save that which proceeded from the noise of the breeze in the

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tops of the trees, and from the throat of the ring-dove in her leafy asylum.

This lovely valley was covered with a greensward, smooth and soft as velvet, and scattered over with tamarind-trees and a sort of thorny plum. In the very bottom of the dingle was a water-course, which rendered the ground in some places too swampy to bear a foot. Arzoomund crossed this little stream with one leap, and reaching the other side, began to ascend; then proceeding still farther, he entered upon a piece of ground beautifully undulated, and ornamented in a wonderfully picturesque manner with flowering bushes and forest trees, intersected with narrow paths, winding among the woods.

CHAPTER VI.

Here were also many herds of cows. Arzoomund passed along one of the before-mentioned paths, till, coming upon an open point of ground, he saw before him a long track of upland, scattered with forest trees, in the front of which was a green lawn, and at the edge of the lawn a tomb built with open pillars, being square, and having a dome and minaret or small towers at each corner. One front of this tomb faced towards the open lawn, and the other towards the woods.

Arzoomund approached and entered the building. In the centre of this place was a chamber, the walls of which were covered with cement resembling marble: and two sarcophagi of equal size were standing side by side in the middle of the room. Many sentences from the Koran were written in Arabic, with gilt characters, on the walls; and several figures of peacocks were painted in different parts of the chamber.

Arzoomund stood awhile to contemplate this scene, and to try to decipher the Arabic characters. At length, looking on the cold resting-places of the dead, he fell into meditations on death, and again his thoughts were strongly drawn towards the Christian religion, and the various doctrines which had been explained to him from their sacred books.

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The deep quiet and solitude of the place invited him to repose. He accordingly sat down, leaning his back against the wall, lost in the consideration of the wickedness of man, and the various disgusting scenes he had witnessed since he had left Merut. "What people," thought he to himself, "are able to give any account of this depravity of man's nature but the Christians? and what persons are acquainted with the remedy of these evils, which, nevertheless, all men feel, but these Christians? Who has hope in death but these Christians? And in what individuals do we ever see an entire change of nature but in some of these persons? The Christian religion is then undoubtedly the only true one. Would to God that I could dare to confess my belief!"

While these thoughts passed through his mind, the sweet and bitter thus mingling themselves in his cogitations, sleep overpowered him, and he insensibly lost all recollection, the murmur of the woods being the only sound which reached the place of rest which he had chosen.

The sun was rapidly descending the western sky when the son of Alfoo awoke—he started up, and looking round him, could scarcely recollect where he was; he hastened, however, from the tomb, and before he had again reached the watercourse, the glowing disk of the planet of day had fallen beneath the horizon, its disappearance being followed by a momentary twilight, and that being as suddenly succeeded by the shades of night.

Arzoomund presently mounted the hill and passed the grove; and having come within view of the temple and the hut, and of the village a little below them, innumerable lights, and various dissonant sounds of horns, drums, horrible, harsh, and grating stringed instruments, together with the howlings of dogs and the clamours of drunken revellers, burst upon his senses. The evening festivity had commenced in the village, and Arzoomund, drawing near to the hut, found that his father and Ram Cookoo were already gone to the village, from which he doubted not that they would return in a state of intoxication.

The shades of night were now fast advancing. Arzoomund sat down on the steps of the idol temple, and watched the moon, which was at the full, and was fast rising above the horizon. In the mean time, the noises from the market-place became every moment more loud

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and dissonant, wild shrieks mingling themselves with the other sounds.

It was some trial to the young man to refrain from this scene of revelry, but he was resolved to have nothing to do with it, and yet how to wile away the evening he knew not. He sat at the foot of the idol for some time, then suddenly starting up, he lounged towards the river which rolled at the foot of the little hill, and running along the back of the market-place, passed on towards the Ganges. The banks were at this time nearly overflowing, it being the end of the rainy season; and the turbid and muddy waters were rushing along with a sullen murmur.

In a line with the river was a wide path for the use of the carts. Arzoomund pursued this path a little way, for it was now completely illuminated by the light of the moon. The river was not exceedingly broad, though its current was rapid, and Arzoomund could perceive that on the opposite side its banks were shaded by a high grove.

Arzoomund traversed the path till he came to the back of the market-place, one street of which ran down to the river, and was terminated by a *ghaut*, or flight of stairs, descending to the water.

The young man crossed this end of the village as speedily as possible, but not before his ears had been assailed with loud shouts, shrieks, and certain obscene and blasphemous expressions, such as made him start with horror, and hasten forward into a part more retired.

A few steps brought him out of observation into a kind of cluster of castor-oil bushes, behind which a road branched out from the path towards the plain, in the direction of the *byragges's* house.

Arzoomund chose the path which ran by the river, and went on a little way till he found himself under a low rock, in a place where the path was considerably wider. Here an object which met his eyes caused him to start, and inclined him to turn round—This was no other than what he supposed to be a corpse lying on a bedstead, and left in that exposed situation, either to be swept away by the river, or consumed by the jackals, whose bay or howl was even then remotely heard. As the young man was in the act of turning, his eye being still fixed on the appalling object, he thought he heard a groan, and was certain that the figure moved.

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It is a common custom of the Hindoos, when an elder of the family becomes infirm, and is supposed to be a needless cumberer of the ground, to bring him down to the river-side on his bed, and leave him there to perish, supplying him with a loaf of bread and a jar of water. Sometimes, indeed, his tender relations go so far as to hasten the termination of his sufferings by stuffing clay into his nostrils, mouth, and ears; but where a poor creature has not power to help himself, it is not always thought necessary to put this speedy conclusion to his sufferings. Truly doth the Scripture say, *The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.* Psalm lxxiv. 20. How little conscious are many thoughtless Europeans, while revelling in all the luxuries of the East, of the horrors which are often passing at their very doors!

Arzoomund was well aware of the cruel custom of the Hindoos respecting their old people, and though he naturally shuddered at approaching the horrible object which now presented itself, yet, being convinced by repeated groans that the poor creature was still living, he determined not to forsake him, till he had at least tried whether it might not be possible to assist him. Accordingly he walked up to the bedstead, which was placed so that the slightest motion would precipitate it into the river, and addressed the person lying upon it, saying, "Father, what are you doing here?"

"Awaiting my dissolution," replied the other, in a hollow groan. "I have already lived too long; I am forsaken by one child, and condemned to death by another; and the sooner I depart this miserable life the better."

"Are you sick?" said Arzoomund.

"No," replied the old man; "I have no disease but a cramp in my limbs, got from a cold; I am otherwise hale and strong: but I am miserable, and I have lived too long; and this is my crime. And now, kind stranger, if you have pity on me, propel this bedstead into the river, and put an end to my sufferings."

The moon, that a moment before had passed behind a light cloud, now burst forth and shot her full splendour on the features of the old man, which, though worn with misery, had evidently once been handsome, and were even now shaded with hair as white as snow, which added not a little to their venerable appearance. Nei-

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ther was there any thing sordid or filthy in the old man's garments or person, though it was evident that his lower limbs were contracted with spasms.

"I will obey you," said Arzoomund, whose whole heart was moved with compassion, "I will plunge the bedstead into the river, and will endeavour to relieve you;" and so saying, he stooped down over the old man, took him in his arms, and laid him softly on the higher part of the bank, at the same time kicking the bedstead into the river with a force which made the waters splash up as high as the place whereon he stood. "And now," added he, turning to the old man, "tell me, are you willing to live, and will you accept my help?"

"Are you a man," returned the other, "or some divinity descended from heaven to help the afflicted? But how, how can you help me? Am I not an outcast—one cut off from the living—an unclean creature—one whose touch is now become contamination? Where will you place me where I shall not be utterly despised? Who now will dip his hands with me in the dish?"

"I know one who will," replied Arzoomund; "try to rise, and follow me."

"Alas!" said the old man, "could I have risen, do you think I would have lain to perish where you found me? A week ago, and I was as active in a manner as you are, though feeble through age. I was on a journey, and came to this place; but here I was seized with a cold in my limbs, I became helpless, and the companions of my journey left me to strangers, who disposed of me as you have seen."

"I see how it is," said Arzoomund, shaking his head, "but I will not forsake you; you are thin and spare, and I am strong; I have lifted heavier weights than you are, and I will carry you to a place where you may lie hid till I can procure further help." So saying, he took the old man on his back, and staggered off with him in the direction of the plain, taking the road which we have before mentioned as branching out from the path-way.

When arrived at the castor-oil bushes, the old man and the son of Alfoo were both aware of their vicinity to the market-place, and Arzoomund quickened his pace, and ran for several yards, till at length, wholly exhausted, he set the old man down, and stood to recover his breath and wipe the perspiration from his forehead.

"My son, my son!" said the old man, "it is enough,

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you can do no more; leave me to perish, though I will bless you with my last breath!"

"Wait but a moment," said Arzoomund; "I will but carry you to yonder solitary building which you see not a hundred yards hence, and I will place you there, and will, after a while, return with help sufficient to bring you into a place of safety. So now," he said, "one more effort, and the worst of my labour will be over."

So saying, he contrived to take up the old man again, and had presently reached the ruin from which Ram Cookoo had issued in the morning; there laying the old man down, he sat down himself, and produced some kind of sweetmeat with which he had provided himself for his journey, and had concealed in the envelope of his girdle; he gave a part to the old man, and took some himself.

"And now," said he, having recovered his breath, "I must leave you, and it may be an hour or more before I return; but wait with patience, and commend yourself to God, not to the dumb idols which have forsaken you, and would have left you to perish, but to the one only and true God, who made the heavens and the earth, and is even now with you, though you know him not." Thus speaking, the youth darted from the ruin, and the old man heard his rapid step till it was lost in distance.

It was the house of the *byraggee* to which Arzoomund directed his steps; neither was he disappointed in his plans of procuring assistance from this Christian. He was, however, careful not to tell his story to any other ear than that of Munghool Doss himself, knowing the prejudices of the unconverted Hindoos. Neither did the old Christian himself think it prudent to betray the whole of the story, but alleging that there was a poor man on the road who wanted help, he himself started forth on this work of mercy, and, with five or six of his own servants, was on the way to the ruin before the time which Arzoomund had designated for his return was near its accomplishment.

It was on this occasion that the young Hindoo first enjoyed that greatest of all luxuries, the sense of having done a good action. We cannot suppose that he had as yet a sufficient sense of religion to induce him to carry the glory of this good action to Him who had enabled him to perform it; nevertheless, he had some faint idea

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that it was his knowledge of the Christian religion which had thus enabled him to triumph over the prejudices in which he had been brought up, and the delight he felt in this triumph led the *byraggee* to hope that the time was not very distant in which this fine young man would be enabled wholly to cast away the fetters of heathenism, and to break the bonds with which the customs of his fathers had bound him.

When the *byraggee* and his men were within an arrow's flight of the ruined walls, Arzoomund ran before them, and as he entered the square chamber, he exclaimed, "I am come again, my father, and I have brought you the help you needed. Look up," he added, "your deliverers are at hand; they are Christians, and you will do well to learn of them and worship their God, for the Hindoos have cast you out, and you are no longer bound to them."

"A thousand blessings rest on thy head, my son!" said the old man. "If health should ever be restored to these feeble limbs, I am bound to serve thee till death."

"Alas!" said Arzoomund, "but I shall not be with you. I must leave you this moment."

"And will you not return, my son?" said the old man.

"Perhaps in six weeks I may see you again," replied the youth; "but I charge you, let what has passed between us be buried for ever in your own bosom. The place in which I found you is known only to him who will be your master, it must be told to no other."

At that moment the *byraggee* entered, and by his directions the old man was placed in a strong sheet taken from the shoulders of some one present, and one man taking each corner, he was carried away towards the Christian's house, blessing Arzoomund and all those around him with every breath he drew.

This transaction had taken several hours, and when Arzoomund returned to the hut, he found his father and the *fakeer* stretched on the floor, in a state of drunken insensibility. These sights were not indeed strange to Arzoomund, though at this moment the disgraceful state of the father seemed to be particularly unpleasing and distressing in the eyes of his son. Nevertheless, the young man was so fatigued that he presently fell asleep, and enjoyed a long and uninterrupted repose till the day was considerably advanced

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The following morning, though not at a very early hour, Alfoo and his son renewed their journey, and, after a few uninteresting days, having crossed the Ganges, they fell in with a company of merchants, who were travelling with a guard into the higher provinces.

In this society, though they proceeded slowly, they were secure, and though they were taken a little out of their way, yet they were enabled to keep with the rest of the travellers till they had crossed the first ridge of the Himmalaya.

Arzoomund, who had never seen a mountain, excepting at a distance, so remote as scarcely to be distinguished from clouds, was filled with astonishment when first a long range of the Himmalaya burst upon his view, after two or three days of fog, during which the caravan had been continually approaching. There were many there present who then saw these mountains for the first time, but few who were in a state of mind to be struck with their sublime appearance; for a certain degree of intellectual cultivation is required to enable an individual to appreciate the beauties and wonders of creation.

The mountains of Himmalaya, to the north of India, are incomparably the highest mountains in the world; the mighty Andes bear no comparison to them, and the loftiest peaks in Switzerland shrink to nothing before these giants of creation.

Although the bases of these mountains are situated in scorching and burning plains, yet thousands of feet towards their summits are covered with everlasting snow, the meltings from which supply the sources of countless rivers, and frequently swell these rivers so as to make them overflow whole provinces.

The central parts of these mountains, beneath the regions of snow, produce the fruits, and flowers, and trees of higher latitudes; and here the valleys are refreshed with many brooks and fountains of water, pouring from rocky heights, or forming swamps and lakes in the hollows of the mountain.

Alfoo and Arzoomund accompanied the caravan through the pass, and then took a different direction; the caravan proceeding towards the east, and the pedler and his son towards the north.

On the third day from the time of their leaving the mountains, they entered the plain of Dira, and descried the little village which had been the birth-place of Alfoo,

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right before them. "There," said the pedler, pointing out the village to his son, "there is the birth-place of your father, and your father's father. It is now twenty-five years since I was graceless enough to leave my parents' house: I have often thought of my father since that time with sorrow; but I am come hither to make up for my fault, and I sincerely hope that I shall find the old man living; or, if he be not living, that I shall learn the place where his body was buried; for I will raise such a monument over his remains as shall make my name resound through all the country."

Thus did the poor man boast of what he intended to do, and descanted on the topic till the travellers found themselves at the gate of the place: for the village, though small and insignificant, was walled.

It was nearly sunset when Alfoo and his son arrived at Dira, and the pedler immediately waited upon the head man of the village, who was soon enabled to recollect him. It was necessary to do this before he proceeded to inquire after his father; but he was no sooner gone out from the house of the chief than he proceeded immediately to the narrow street in which his father used to keep his shop, and near to which had stood the dwelling of his uncle, who had been a tradesman.

As soon, however, as he came opposite to his father's door, he perceived that the shop was in the possession of another man, a stranger being seated in his father's accustomed place.

Alfoo was much troubled on seeing this, and expressed his grief so audibly, that many gathered round him to inquire the cause of his sorrow, and among these was an old woman, whose face he remembered.

"Where," said the pedler, "is old Mockdoom? I was told that he was living and well six months since, and enjoying all his faculties."

"It is true enough," replied the old woman, "Mockdoom was living and well six months ago; yea, and three months ago: for about that time he sold all that he had, and went off towards the south in quest of his son, whom a traveller had seen in Merut. His nephew, the son of his deceased brother, whom he had adopted, went with him; and by this time we may expect that he is at his journey's end; that is" (in another voice), "if he meet with no mischance by the way; but his nephew, or rather, I should say, his adopted son, was

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of a very bad character, and bore the old man a grudge for the restraints he had put upon him."

Alfoo was at once both hurt and perplexed at this news, and, turning to his son, said, "What have we now to do but to retrace our steps, and that as speedily as we are able? for there are none here to care for us;" and with that he uttered such cries that the old woman, who now recollected him, insisted on his coming to her house or hut, which was near at hand; and there she endeavoured to administer such consolations as generally occur to ordinary and ignorant minds on occasions of this kind.

As Alfoo and his son were severely mortified and much fatigued, the old woman, after a while, ceased from her more empty condolences, and asked the travellers if she should supply them with supper. "I can, however, offer you nothing, my means being small," she said; "but I am ready to wait upon you hand and foot, provided you will give me wherewith to purchase you food."

Alfoo gave the woman what she required, and she cooked them an excellent supper, after which they stretched themselves on the floor of her hut, and commenced their slumbers.

CHAPTER VII.

Alfoo and his son lodged with this old woman as long as they remained in Dira, which was only till their strength was recruited for their journey home. In the mean time, they visited the few old acquaintances who remembered the pedler when a youth; and then, having handsomely rewarded the old woman, and Arzoomund having given the only remaining book to the head man of the village, they set out on their return to Merut, having altered their track a little, intending to drop down the Cally Nuddee in a boat.

Alfoo had hoped to compound with his conscience by showing more of kindness in the old age of his parent than he had testified of duty towards him in his own youth; and being deprived of the means of making this

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indemnification to justice, he was uneasy, and much oppressed; for certain it was, that since he had lived in the neighbourhood of enlightened persons, he had had much clearer views of right and wrong, and the obedience and discretion of his own son seemed as it were to reproach him continually for his own ill conduct to his parent. He was therefore a good deal oppressed in his spirits during the whole of his voyage down the river, and spoke little, excepting to tell his dreams, which, he said, augured no good; as his father's figure continually presented itself to him, and always in some ghastly and terrific form. At length their journey drew to a close, and the boat having come to an anchor at the landing-place of the little village which was the dwelling-place of Ram Cookoo, the father and son came on shore; and, having first ascertained that the *fakeer* was not at home, they proceeded on foot to the house of Munghool Doss. As they traversed the plain between the village and the dwelling of the *byraggee*, Alfoo being uneasy and disappointed, and his son Arzoomund having many thoughts of his own, to which he ventured not to give utterance, they both proceeded in silence. It was the time of day in which the *byraggee* usually took his walk or ride, and it so happened, that as they came near the ruined cottage so frequently mentioned, they met the old gentleman himself, walking alone with a book in his hand.

As soon as he recognised the pedler and his son, he held out his hand and bade them welcome; and, turning round with them to take them to his house, asked them how they had sped during their journey.

"So ill," returned Alfoo, "that I heartily wish I had never left Merut. Every step I have taken has been labour in vain, pain, and weariness, and no fruit."

"How?" said the *byraggee*.

"Why," replied Alfoo, "the old man, my father, has left Dira; and unless he is now at my house, at Merut, I much fear that he has perished by the way."

"As to his being at your house at Merut, I can answer for that not being the case," returned Munghool Doss, "for I was there only yesterday, supposing that you might have returned without calling on me by the way."

On hearing this, Alfoo expressed increased uneasiness, and the pain he evidently felt did him honour in the eyes of the *byraggee*.

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However, the old Christian thought it would be well to prove him further, and said, "Tell me, how is this: you have lived till now, more than twenty years, without anxiety respecting your father; how comes it, then, that you now feel so uneasy about him?"

Alfoo visibly changed countenance on hearing this question, and replied, "Have you, in your long experience, never heard of such a thing as a man's conscience taking a long sleep, and yet awaking again after a time? Though I will not say that my conscience has ever been quite dead respecting my father, and if it had been so, the dreams I have had about him some months past were enough to rouse my feelings had they been deader than they were."

"And mayhap," said the *byraggee*, "you may have chanced to have heard some things since the Christian gentleman has been at Merut, which may have given you a new view of filial duties? perhaps you may have heard your son repeat the commandment, *Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee?*"

"The commandment is a good one," replied Alfoo, "and I hope that my son will give heed to it. If I, in my youth, neglected it, he can bear me witness that I am now willing, if the Lord would permit me, to pay my father the debt of duty which I owe him."

"You certainly do well in seeking your parent, and endeavouring to mend his condition," replied Munghool Doss; "but how a duty performed at one time of life can make up for one neglected at another, I cannot comprehend."

Alfoo looked at the *byraggee* as he spoke, as one stares on another who is uttering some great absurdity, and said, "What! do you conceive that if I could now find my father, and make him happy to the end of his days, and bury him with credit, that I should not fully make up to him the injury I have done him?"

"In reply to your question," said the *byraggee*, "let me ask you another—Do you mean to assert, that if your son were to act towards you in the most dutiful and affectionate manner possible for ten years to come, these well-spent ten years would be sufficient to exonerate him from all respect towards you for the next ten years?"

"Certainly not," said Alfoo, "because, after ten, and

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ten, and twenty years were gone, he would still be my son, and would still owe me duty."

"Then," returned the *byraggee*, "how are any acts of kindness and duty now shown towards your father, to balance your account with him for your neglect and ill-conduct in your youth! When you have done all you can, you will only have done your duty for the time being, and no exertion which you can make will be sufficient to balance the old account. Hence, when we have once sinned, we never can, by any efforts which we can make, set our accounts straight with God, and therefore we may learn the need of an atonement, which atonement must be made by a sinless being.

"Such is the state of man on earth," continued the *byraggee;* and this consideration was what made me miserable before I met, in the books of the Christians, the account of that full, free, and sufficient sacrifice which the Almighty has supplied for his fallen creatures."

To all this Alfoo made no reply, but walked on, lost in meditation; and the party being come near the gates of the house, Arzoomund took the occasion to inquire of the *byraggee* after the old man whom he had commended to his care, speaking so low that his father did not hear him.

"He has recovered the use of his limbs," replied the *byraggee*, "and is learning to read his Bible. Are you enough of a Christian to rejoice in that news?"

"Perhaps I may be," returned the young man, in a very low tone, and sighing as he spoke.

By this time they had entered the gate, and were recognised by many old acquaintances. The *byraggee* gave orders that a supper should be prepared for the travellers, and then led them into the hall or centre room of his house, directing some one to call the old man whom the son of Alfoo had recommended to his care.

"What old man is that, son?" asked the pedler.

"I do not know myself," returned Arzoomund, "but it was some forlorn creature whom I recommended to the care of this Christian gentleman, knowing that it is a part of the religion of the Christians to succour the afflicted, and to call no man common or unclean."

Before any reply could be made, the old man in question appeared in the door-way, neatly dressed, duly shaved, and standing erect on his feet; nevertheless he did not come on, but stood looking on Alfoo and his son like one in a dream; while the other two, though

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affected in different ways, seemed equally unable to stir from the spot in which they stood. The good old *byraggee* enjoyed the scene, and looked from one to another with a degree of delight which was almost too great for utterance.

"Gracious heaven!" exclaimed Alfoo, at length, his voice interrupted by deep groans, "my prayer has then been heard!" and springing forward, he fell at his father's feet, and humbly implored his pardon for all past offences.

"My grandfather!" said Arzoomund, looking at the *byraggee;* "and is that my grandfather? and have I saved my grandfather from a cruel death! The struggle is now over—it is past," he added; and falling on his knees, lifting up his hands and eyes, "Almighty God of the Christians, hear me—hear me now," he cried; "to thee henceforth I devote myself; here I renounce the religion of my fathers, and here I swear henceforward to acknowledge thee, and only thee, in the sight of all my brethren."

"God be praised!" said the *byraggee*, melting into tears, "I had not dared to hope for this."

The old man by this time had embraced and pardoned his son—had wept upon him and kissed him; but tender as this recognition had been, it was nothing to that which followed, when the venerable patriarch, rushing forward, sunk at the feet of his grandson, who had risen from his knees, and had been only prevented from running to meet the embrace by the sudden and rapid motion of the old man.

"O, my son! my child! my hope! my deliverer from death! child of my heart, and my best hope! my preserver! my beloved!" exclaimed the venerable father; "and do I behold thy lovely face again! and do I find in thee a son—a child—the dearest of sons! Now let me die, let me depart, for my happiness is complete:" and the old man, being wholly overcome with joy, fainted, and would have sunk on the ground, had not his grandson prevented his fall, and supported him in his arms, until he had laid him gently on the floor, where he still sustained his head upon his breast.

In the mean time, every person in the domestic service of the *byraggee* was soon in the hall, looking on with amazement, and little able to comprehend the nature of the scene. Neither was Alfoo himself less perplexed, for it was evident to him that his father and his son had

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met before, though where and when he could not conceive, nor could he conjecture wherefore, if his son knew that his grandfather was with the *byraggee*, he should conceal the fact from him, and allow him to take so long a journey in vain. Nevertheless, he was restrained from speaking by the condition of the old man, who for some minutes seemed to be wholly overpowered; his eyes were closed, and he could hardly be perceived to breathe.

At length, however, Mockdoom revived, opened his eyes, looked up, and joined his hands as if in prayer, and then raising his ardent gaze towards his grandson, he lifted himself up, and thus addressed Alfoo:—"My son," he said, "you are at a loss, I see, to account for the joy which I express at the sight of my grandson. In what manner I was introduced by him into this house is known to many here present, though not perhaps to you; and there are, indeed, many particulars of my meeting with my grandson known only to ourselves and one other person. It is now several months since I was informed, after a separation of many years, that you, my son, were living at Merut, and I therefore proposed to my nephew, whom I had adopted, and who could never be prevailed on to settle in business, to accompany me on a journey to seek you. I had amassed a few *rupees* during many long years of hard and solitary labour, since my son had left me. Before I quitted my house, I gave a few of these to my nephew, of whose honesty I had no suspicion, and the rest I concealed about my person, reserving in my hands only enough for the current expenses of my journey.

"When a day's distance from Dira, my nephew and I fell in with a party proceeding southward, among whom was an old friend of mine with his two sons. These persons were honest and respectable, and their presence proved my safeguard till we arrived at the little village which is hard by. There I was suddenly taken ill, and though exceedingly anxious to proceed at all hazards to Merut, my nephew would not hear of it, and insisted upon being left to take care of me while the rest of the party went forward.

"I had no suspicions of the young man, whom, since his father's death, I had adopted, and had no other uneasiness but from anxiety to get to my journey's end, and to be relieved from the pain of my limbs, which utterly disabled me from moving.

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"My nephew had procured a lodging at the house of a widow near the river, and during two days all proper attention was paid to me; but on the second evening, I know not how it was, after having taken something which had been prepared for me by my hostess, I seemed to lose all distinct recollection, and lay stretched on my bed, not asleep, but in such a state of disorder that, although I saw my nephew at times before me, and the woman of the house, and perceived that they were moving to and fro, and very busy, yet I knew not what they were about, or what they purposed.

"At length, towards morning, I fell asleep, and slept till the next day was advanced; I then opened my eyes and found myself in the open air, stretched on my bed, and utterly unable to move. Above me was the wide expanse of heaven, without a single cloud; and at my feet rolled the thick and troubled stream of the Cally Nuddee. It was some time before I understood my situation, and when at length I did comprehend it with all its horrors, my senses again seemed to forsake me, and various wild and horrible visions seemed to float over my mind.

"Oh! what a long, what a dreadful day was that!" said the old Hindoo; "how anxiously did I look for death! To seek for pity from the passengers who brushed beside my coueh I knew was vain; I therefore attempted it not; and at that dreadful period I knew no God to whom I could apply, for I felt that the gods of my fathers were as little able to help me as I was to help myself.

"Thus wore away that long, long, horrible day; and night at length came—a night without one ray of hope, as I then thought, for me.

"Exhausted with weakness and pain, I had had a temporary forgetfulness, when I was roused again by wild shrieks from the village, for it was a day of festival. I awoke and called for death, and uttered many groans and cries, and yet I had no hope of deliverance. At that moment, however, my deliverer was at hand, and it was the child of my only son who was to perform this work of mercy.

"He was walking by the river-side; he saw me, and came up to me; he lifted me from my bed, and plunged it into the water; he carried me from the dreadful place, and finished his work of mercy by bringing me where the light of life has shone on my dark soul—where I have been made to know the God of the Christians,

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and to understand that He only is good, that He only is merciful, that He only careth for man, and that happiness can only be found in His service; and therefore," added the old man, "having by my own confession acknowledged myself to be of the number of those who are counted unclean among the Hindoos, I have snapped the cords which bound me to my former brethren, and nothing remains for me but to throw myself on the mercy of Him who takes no account of ritual uncleanness, and holdeth nothing in abhorrence but moral turpitude—on the mercy of Him who hath provided a fountain of purification for all."

The *byraggee* gave the old man his hand as he uttered these last words, and the dusky cheek of the young Arzoomund blushed deeply with delight; but there was a kind of murmur of disapprobation through the assembly in general. Most of those present then slunk away to their respective places; where they attempted to strengthen each other in their errors, as persons endeavour to prop a falling tower, though at the risk of their own destruction.

There was now no reason wherefore Mockdoom and Arzoomund should not eat from the table of the *byraggee*, and they seemed rather impatient (to use a classical term, not altogether out of its place on the banks of the Cally Nuddee) to pass this Rubicon, lest by any means they might be tempted to go back from the way which they had chosen.

After their supper, the *byraggee* took them up to the house-top, where he engaged with them in prayer, informing them that they must for the present consider his house as their home, and promising to supply them with employment.

In all this there was nothing but pure, unmingled joy, and only one drop of bitterness remained in a cup replete with all that was otherwise sweet and refreshing. This was the anxiety which Mockdoom and his grandson could not but feel for Alfoo; and so bitter was this anxiety that, after prayer, they went down to the room where the pedler was with his companions, and did all that in them lay to reconcile him to what they had done.

He was not then to be reconciled, for he was exceedingly displeased, and remained so for a length of time; but my last advices from that remote country have renewed my hopes for this poor man, and I have reason

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to think that he is actually given at this time to the prayers of his son.

And now, having woven my web to a considerable length, I must shortly cut it from the loom; although I trust that the curious grotesque forms, and the various figures of dusky brown, of gold, and of ethereal blue, which I have wrought into its texture, may have prevented the eye from wearying as it was unfolded before it; yet I am now compelled to bring it to a conclusion; and, having represented one more scene with my magic shuttle, to cut it short, and leave it to some other hand who may hereafter know more of the persons whose histories I have hitherto traced, to renew the woof, and add the warp, and tell how the Christian rejoiced in life, and triumphed in death.

The last scene I have to describe is that which took place at Merut, in the chapel belonging to the European gentleman, at the period of the baptism of Mockdoom and his grandson. It was an affecting sight, and many came to see it; but as those who had sung the praises of Almighty God on occasion of the baptism of Munghool Doss were engaged at that time in the wars of the Dhoon, from which many never returned, it depended on the little children of the master and a few poor Christian natives to raise the song of triumph; and if their feeble voices could not be heard beyond the green alleys of the surrounding garden, it matters little, for it is well known that the hymn was re-echoed in heaven, and resounded through all the mansions of the blessed.

The lady and the master, with their little ones, are no longer in India; the servants who occupied the *compound* are separated, some having found other masters, and others being left without friend or home; and the little chapel from which the song of Zion first resounded in that strange land is fallen to decay; yet the door which was then first opened can never be closed, and the memory of the master, and of others who first brought the Word of Life into the province of Delhi, is still held dear by the many humble Christians who now form a flourishing church in the place where so lately the name of Christ was scarcely known, or where it was only held up as an object of mockery and derision.

END OF ARZOOMUND.

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THE

BIRTH-DAY PRESENT.

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INTRODUCTION

TO

THE BIRTHDAY PRESENT.

Little Emily's birthday was on the 21st of February; and, as she could not go out to play, because it did not happen in the summer, like those of her brothers and sisters, her mother always made it a rule, in order to make the season pleasant, to present her with a new book on the occasion.

On that happy morning in which little Emily concluded her tenth year, when she first awoke she found on her pillow a charming little volume, bound in red morocco, and marked on the back with the following title, viz. "The Loss of the Doves."

If any little girl of the age of Emily should hereafter take up the small volume which I have written, and read till she comes to the title above-mentioned, viz. "The Loss of the Doves," I have little doubt that she will be as anxious as Emily was to know what was the history of the loss of the Doves, and whether they were ever found again; and though it is a fairy tale, I will venture to say that no mother will object to it on that account, when she is apprized that this little story is intended to convey, under a figurative veil, a certain truth of vital importance, which cannot be too deeply impressed on the minds of young people.

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THE

BIRTH-DAY PRESENT.

The little story which is contained in Emily's book is related in the following words:—

"My parents were humble and lowly persons, born in servitude, but happy in being devoted to the service of the Fairy Sophia, by which name we may understand that heavenly wisdom is intended.

"My parents remained long in the service of their lady, while she, being immortal, attained higher degrees of beauty and excellence as they became gray-headed, wrinkled, and infirm.

"At length, the fairy, observing that they were no longer fit for very active duties, appointed them to a situation where they had little to do but to take care of me and my two brothers, and to feed and attend a pair of milk-white doves, which were highly prized by her, and for which she had planted a garden, where, in a very solitary place, and far withdrawn from the path of the traveller, she had brought together by her wisdom all that is rare and beautiful in nature.

"Within this garden was the cottage provided for my parents,—it was a rustic edifice, covered with thatch, and surrounded with a verandah of bamboo, over which various creeping plants wound their ever-flowering branches:—in that garden existed an everlasting spring, and every revolving month produced some charming fruit or some fragrant blossom.

"All was elegant and rustic within the house, for my mother was neat-handed and gentle, and thus the interior of our dwelling afforded no contrast with the charming scenes which presented themselves without. The garden in which we were enclosed was very extensive,

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and contained within its ample circumference varieties of rock and waterfalls, springing wells, shady groves, fragrant thickets, umbrageous glades, and flowery lawns; and as there was every thing in that charming region to delight the eye and regale the sense of smell, neither was the ear without its feast, for there were ever heard the murmur of soft breezes among the trees, and the hum of bees; added to which, the song of the doves of which we had the charge formed a concert which would have soothed the ear of insanity, and even stilled the working of an envious and malicious heart.

"My father had followed the business of a shepherd in early life, and had been accustomed to lead his flock through some of the most beautiful regions of that wide territory over which our queen presided; he had not been instructed, at that period, in the knowledge of letters, but his lady had, in her great condescension, taught him the use of certain characters, which are traced on every natural object, and which, under their various combinations and modifications, supply sources of information superior to any exhibited in books.

"Thus she enabled him to discover the mysteries of wisdom, in scenes and situations where all human knowledge seems to be shut out.

"In this sort of lore my father was so far advanced, that mysteries were unfolded to him which are wholly disregarded by common observers: in the course of a brook, as it proceeded from its head or fountain to its mouth, and in the manner in which it supplied nourishment to the various plants reflected on its surface, he was enabled to discern the modes in which intellectual life is imparted to the mind of man; and in the various strata of earth and stone visible on the side of a craggy cliff, to read the histories of departed ages, and trace the revolutions of kingdoms and generations past.

"Such was my father, nor can it be supposed that a man of this description would prove an uninstructive preceptor to his children. It was our business to keep our lady's garden in order, to prune the trees, and remove all weeds and fallen leaves, and also to clean the marble basins where the turtles, which were our especial care, alighted to bathe themselves in the heat of the day.

"I have before said, that I have two brothers, my eldest was once called Avaro, and my second Otioso; on

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me, the fairy, our queen, bestowed the name of Pazienzo. We were nearly of an age, and our early days passed in one even and happy course, till the period of childhood had departed. The eyes of our father being ever upon us, and his voice directing our labours, and imparting instruction, while our tender mother carefully supplied our temporal wants, and was ever ready to receive us with smiles under the paternal roof.

"In the mean time the fairy frequently visited us, and supplied us with such means of improvement as our father was unable to afford us.

"Thus proceeded the calm and secluded tenor of our days, till I had reached the fifteenth year of my life; when, one morning, as I was with my brothers in the garden, near the fountain of the doves, a winged form, not unlike our own fairy, seated in a chariot drawn by ravens, birds of ill omen, flew over the garden, and as she passed, she dropped a carcanet of jewels, which I first perceived as it fell on the grass at my feet; and while I stooped to take it up, being attracted by its splendour, my two brothers sprang forward at the same instant to seize it from me. I was unwilling to give up the prize, for a prize indeed I thought it, and a contest ensued, which continued for some time with increased violence, and was at length maintained only by Avaro and myself. Otioso having speedily given way.

"Our rage became so immoderate, that we seized on each other's hair, wrestled and shouted, till the echoes in the garden repeated our cries, and the grass was covered with the fragments of our garments.

"Suddenly we were roused from our angry transports, by the voice of our father, and at the same moment we were made aware that our doves had taken to their wings, and were flying towards the boundaries of the garden.

"'What are you doing there?' exclaimed our venerable parent; 'do you not see, unhappy boys! that you have driven away our doves, and who shall call them back? When peace has taken wing, who shall restore it?' and with that he tore his white hair, and threw himself in grief upon the ground.

"On hearing our father's voice, and the information which it communicated, we all stood still, and looking towards the going down of the sun, we saw the doves flying through the air, swift as arrows. When first we

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noticed them, their forms were discernible, and their snowy plumage glittered in the sun; they were passing over the lower parts of the garden, where a wide lawn was scattered with many aromatic shrubs, and there they formed various circles in the air, as if they were unwilling to leave their ancient haunts; but again rising higher, they passed directly onward, and were diminished to a point, to the eye; for a while we could distinguish them as they passed the summit of a lofty eminence, covered with cedar-trees, within the verge of the garden, where, on a marble pinnacle, which arose above the dark groves, was a pavilion, appropriated peculiarly to the use of our lady, whenever she was disposed to visit us. But while we looked intently in the same direction, the objects we pursued were lost in distance, and our eyes for a moment rested on the dome of the pavilion, whose outline was accurately defined on the clear blue ether.

"Our father was the first who spoke, and it was to reproach us as the guilty causers of this affliction. 'What have you done, rash boys?' he said; 'you have ruined me;—how shall I dare to behold the face of our queen and lady! Fourteen years, ungracious boys, have we been nourished and protected in this place. No other duty having been imposed upon us but that we should cherish her favourite doves. And did she not assure us,' continued he, 'that if we ever, by any harsh treatment, chased these her beloved birds from their home, she should never be satisfied till we found the means of bringing them back again?' The poor old man then burst afresh into tears, and lamented himself to this effect:—'Ah, lovely doves, shall I never more behold you seated together, as was your wont, on the branches of yonder spreading plane-tree, dressing your soft plumage, and addressing each other in those tones of constancy known only to yourselves?

"'When wearied with my daily labours, and oppressed with the ardent rays of the noon-day sun, how often have I laid myself beneath the cedars' shade! How often have you, my fair birds, hovered around me, and fanned me with your wings, till sweet sleep came to relieve my aged limbs! How sweet were the notes of your cooings in the cool of the morning when I first opened my chamber window, and how soft the expression of your gentle eyes! But you are now fled, and, I fear, for ever.

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These shades, without you, will become a melancholy solitude, a desolate wilderness, the abode of misery.'

"'But we will go, father,' I said; 'we will go, dear father, and bring them back.'

"'Ah, my son,' he replied, 'and what will then repay me for the loss of your company? one grief follows another; but wait till morning, at any rate let us wait till morning, and if the doves have not fled to the palace of their royal mistress, perhaps they may come back by evening.' So saying, our father arose, and went to the house, where we followed him, silently and sorrowfully.—Our mother was exceedingly afflicted when she heard what had happened, and entirely agreed with our father in the resolution of sending us the following morning in search of the doves, provided that they had not returned before sunrise. And with this view, she set herself to bake cakes on the hearth, which, when prepared, she placed in our wallets, together with some dried fruits, and other little matters, for our journey. These preparations kept us up late, and while they were going forward, I stole out alone, by moonlight, to see if the doves might not have returned to their wonted haunts.

"Being in hopes of finding them, and of being enabled to bring the happy news to my parents; I went first to that part of the garden where a fountain, which gushed from a rock in the centre of the garden, poured itself into a marble basin, shaded with laurels and magnolias. The light was sufficient for my purpose, although the queen of night had not yet filled her horn,—the moonbeams slept on the grass, and the silver crescent was reflected in the water, but I heard no fluttering in the branches of the trees,—no plaintive murmurs, such as were commonly uttered at this quiet hour by the innocent objects of my search; and while I stood looking around me, a dark cloud rolled over the face of the moon, and obscured her image in the fountain. At the same time, a rustling wind arose among the trees, blowing unusually chill, and seeming to convey sorrowful impressions to my heart. I turned from the fountain, and proceeded to the cedar grove, but found no evidence of what I sought. The wind was rushing loud in the highest branches of the trees, and all beneath was involved in silence and obscurity.

"I turned hopeless from this scene, which had never

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seemed gloomy to me before, and having in vain examined many other pa s of the garden, I returned sorrowfully to our cottage, where I spent the remainder of the night in bitter reflections.

"When the sun arose, there was still no sign of the return of our doves, and there was nothing else to be done than for my brothers and myself to bind our wallets on our backs, to take leave of our parents, and set out on our search. Our aged father accompanied us to the boundaries of the garden,—for this territory was enclosed by a high wall, beyond which I had never even passed, at least within my recollection; and as we walked along, he explained to us the reason of his extreme grief at the loss of the doves.

"'My children,' said he, 'the fairy, our benefactress, gave me this garden as a reward for my past services—a reward which, in truth, I do not pretend to have merited; at the same time she required of me no other service but to attend and cherish her doves, informing me that as long as these her birds, which she called the birds of peace, should be content to dwell with me, every flower and every tree in my garden would flourish and prosper to my heart's content. 'The air,' said she, 'will in that case be ever filled with the fragrance of blossoms, and the eye will never be weary of contemplating the beauty of the flowers; the fruits will be abundant, and the fountains will never fail: but,' added she, 'if ever you happen to alarm these gentle birds by the display of angry passions, or by any act of violence exercised in their presence, they will take to flight, and then the trees will cast their unripe fruits, the flowers will droop, the leaves will fall, cold parching winds will dry up your garden, and the whole fair scene will become a desert land.'

"'You, my sons, have driven away these precious birds,' continued our father. 'I am too old to assist you in the search of them. You must, therefore, tread these unknown paths, and I must remain with your poor mother, to lament our separation from all which is most dear to us.'

"When we had arrived at the gate of the garden, our father opened it to us, and having taken a tender farewell of us, he closed it upon us, and left us to ourselves without.

"When the gate was shut upon us, my brothers and I

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seemed at first to be so overwhelmed with grief, that we had hardly presence of mind to look round on the wide country which spread before us. At length, however, having somewhat recovered, we turned our eyes from the side where our aged father had been hidden from our sight by the high door in the garden wall, and saw before us one vast wilderness, intersected by many paths, the chief of which led directly towards a forest, dark and intertangled, which promised no habitation for man.

"'What a wild sort of place is this!' said my brother Otioso, 'and what a senseless chase we are about! I should like to know where we are to find these birds, or in what direction we are to seek them; for who can calculate the labours to which we may be exposed, and what we are to gain by our exertions after all?'

"I had not yet spoken, and might have pleaded that the present question was, not what we are likely to suffer, or what we might gain, but how we might best repair the mischief we had done, and submit ourselves most to the will of our father; but was suddenly interrupted by an old man, dressed like a peasant, who appeared suddenly from behind some brushwood, being followed by a little disagreeable female figure in rude attire.

"The old man came forward more briskly than might have been expected from his halting gait, and when near at hand, he drew a letter from his bosom, written in letters of gold, which he presented to my eldest brother. This letter was from the fairy, our queen. It seemed to have been written in some displeasure. It stated that she was acquainted with our misdemeanours, and that she insisted we should seek the doves which we had put to flight; adding, however, by way of consolation, that the bearer of her letter might perhaps assist us in our search, and that he was permitted by her so to do.

"When Avaro had read this letter aloud, we felt ourselves considerably relieved in our minds; new hopes seemed to be inspired. We addressed the old man with respect, stated our case to him, and asked his counsel. He heard us with unmoved gravity, and then answered, 'It is no easy thing which you ask of me, young men; it seems that you have put your peace to flight by your own misconduct. It is not in my power to restore to you what you have lost; but this dwarf, who accom-

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panies me, is better able to guide you to the recovery of what you have lost than any other person with whom I am acquainted; and if you are willing to follow her steadfastly, I think I might almost venture to promise you success in your undertaking.'

"While the old man spoke, we turned towards the dwarf, and could hardly conceal our disgust and contempt at her appearance, or our aversion to the extreme forbiddingness and sternness of her countenance. She was exceedingly small of stature, and her whole person conveyed the idea of weakness and inefficiency; and there was something peculiarly revolting to sturdy and active youths, like ourselves, in the idea of being beholden to a creature so small and contemptible as the one before us.

"After having looked for an instant at this little creature, my second brother took upon himself to speak; and restraining a smile, which however played upon his lips, he answered the old man to the following purport:—'We are much obliged to our royal mistress, but we should be more so if she would provide us with a guide, if not of a more amiable, at least of a less ridiculous appearance; for,' added he, 'I fear that, with such a companion, we should be in danger of being abused in every place through which we might pass.'

"'Well,' replied the fairy's messenger, very coolly, 'you are at liberty, young men, to do as you please; I have delivered my message, and given my advice, and I have no more to add. If you choose to accept the guidance of my daughter, I shall leave her with you; if not, I take her back.'

"'Your daughter!' said Otioso; 'why, she looks less fit for any exertion than you do yourself.'

"'It may be so,' replied the old man, 'but that is not to your present purpose. Are you, or are you not, willing to accept the guidance of this young person? she is called Dovera, and may not prove to be so disagreeable in the long-run as you may be inclined to apprehend.'

"My two brothers gave a second look at the dwarf, and were on the point of telling the old man that they should be ashamed of travelling with such a companion, when I interrupted them, saying, 'That I was so desirous of restoring comfort to my parents, that whether they were willing or not to accept the offer of assistance

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which the old man had deigned to make us, I, for my part, should not refuse so to do;' adding, 'that if the guide proved so fortunate as to lead me where the doves might be found, I should be ready to acknowledge my obligations to her, and to overlook any of those little imperfections which, on her first appearance, had struck me so forcibly.'

"'You have decided well, young woman,' replied the peasant, 'and you, Dovera, WILL do your duty.' Accordingly, he returned into the wood, leaving us looking one at another, as well as at our new companion; and not having quite made up our minds how we should treat her, or in what light we were to consider this interference on the part of our mistress the fairy.

"In the mean time, our little guide, addressing herself to me in a voice which sounded particularly discordant to my ears, asked me if I was prepared to follow her. 'Do you not see,' said she, 'that the sun is already very high in the heavens, and you have scarcely made one step towards obeying your father?' adding, as she looked round upon us, 'if your intentions are to do your duty as obedient sons, I am ready to direct your steps; if to linger here in disobedience, I have no more to do but to return whence I came.'

"'Methinks, little woman,' replied my brother Otioso, answering for me, 'that you do not use much courtesy of speech to recommend your advice; your manner is not altogether much more pleasing than your appearance.'

"'I do not come here,' she replied, 'either to invite or please: neither do I desire you to follow me from any motives of regard to my person. I am not one of those that please at first sight; and I am often less liked when seen a second or third time than I am at first.'

"'That may very well be,' replied my brother, laughing; 'but as it happens just now to be altogether indifferent to us which way we take, lead on, and we will follow.'

"The dwarf no sooner received this encouragement, than she turned briskly towards the wood, and set forward, with a step so much more lively and steady than could have been expected from a creature to all appearance so ill-formed, that it was with some difficulty that

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I and my brothers, young and active as we were, could keep up with her, without having recourse to running instead of walking.

"At the rate in which we proceeded, it was not to be wondered at if we had presently left the garden far behind, and had advanced some way into the wood, where the trees, forming a shade over our heads, rendered our exertions less fatiguing than they would otherwise have been. Nevertheless, when after two hours our guide went on before us with unabated ardour, my brothers began to murmur, and said, 'Is it really your intention, Pazienzo, to follow this little impertinent creature whithersoever her fancy may direct her? The fairy is playing with us, and has a mind to divert herself at our expense. Are we not altogether irrational in supposing that a creature so diminutive and insignificant should even be able to assist us? let us take our own way, and use our own judgment; none but fools would follow her at this rate.'

"I made no reply to this remonstrance, for, having no other hope, I had resolved to pursue the adventure to the end; and though Dovera was quite as disgusting in my eyes as in those of my brothers, yet I considered that any present inconvenience or disagreeableness which attended her company was nothing when compared with the happiness I should experience, should I be enabled to bring back the doves to my father.

"'I find you do not like my company or my ways,' said the dwarf, who had overheard my brother's remarks, 'and should have been surprised if you had; for I have seldom found that any one ever likes me on a slight acquaintance. Strangers in general think my features of a very ordinary cast: they also complain of my complexion, which wants, I confess, that sort of brilliancy which attracts at first sight; and my person is commonly thought every thing but noble and commanding: but I am never offended at all this; it is, as I before said, very much the same to me what is thought of me by those who first see me.'

"'It is well for you,' said Otioso, 'that you happen not to be very sensitive on these points; for it must be acknowledged that there are few figures less attractive than the one which you present.'

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"'Be it so,' said the dwarf; 'it matters little, I repeat, what you may think of me;' and with that, as we had come to a place where the way took a turn in the wood, she suddenly quitted the more open path, and plunging into a thicket in a right forward direction, began to make her way through the briers and brambles with the activity of a wild-cat,—sometimes scrambling on her hands and knees, in which situation she looked not unlike a small bear, being clad in a russet mantle and petticoat, and wearing a hat, the pointed crown of which, when projected in a direct line, formed no bad representation of the long snout of that unpleasing animal.

"And are we to follow you through these intricate briers, Dovera?' said I; 'surely we cannot be expected so to do.'

"'Obey your own pleasure,' she replied; 'I shall take the way I judge right. If you do not approve my ways, take your own; you are entirely at liberty to follow your own decrees.'

"'You are somewhat short in your exhortations, it must be confessed,' said Otioso.

"'Maybe so,' she replied, 'but I am not used to compliments.'

"'Nor is this a place for them,' I answered, with some vexation, although I could scarcely refrain from laughing, as I plunged before my brothers among the briers, and endeavoured to keep close to the train of my little active guide.

"My brothers seemed ashamed of doing less than I did; and indeed, by going before them, I rendered their way considerably easier than it would otherwise have been; although in so doing I was made to feel the force of many bramble-bushes, by which my coat and face were frequently torn. At length we arrived at a more open space in the wood, where was some short fresh grass growing near a small yet clear pond. Here our little guide, suddenly springing on her feet, and looking towards the sun, which had just attained its meridian height, informed us that it was her intention to rest awhile, in order to give us leisure for our noon-tide repast; and so saying, she sat herself down on the grass, advising us to place ourselves where we might best see and watch her motions; 'for you must by no means

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lose sight of me,' she added, 'that is, if you mean to succeed in your undertaking.'

"'You are altogether so pleasing,' replied Otioso, who seemed to be at once amused and disgusted with our companion, 'that there is no manner of occasion for you to insist upon our keeping you in our view. Undoubtedly, a figure such as yours must ever attract attention.'

"'Your wit wants variety,' replied the dwarf. 'You have said much the same things to me several times since we first met; and I have as often told you that I am not one who am admired on a slight acquaintance.'

"'So far then we agree,' replied Otioso.

"'Eat your dinner, if you are hungry,' replied the dwarf, 'for we have a long journey to take before night, and I wait for no one.'

"We had scarcely spent half an hour in this place of rest, when our active guide rose from the grass, and without saying one word renewed her journey. We had nothing to do but to follow her, for we had no mind to be left in the centre of the wood; we therefore continued to follow her in the same steady and regular manner, till by the length of the shadows we were made aware of the decline of day.

"While I was considering where we might find shelter for the night, we suddenly entered a narrow dell, overshadowed by a rock, from which ran a stream of very clear water. Here our guide entered into a natural hermitage, formed by the rock, where the dry leaves of the last year, which had been drifted into the cavern by the winter's wind, formed couches which looked not a little inviting to persons so thoroughly fatigued as we then were.

"'Here,' said our guide, 'you will be permitted, if you please, to rest for the night; for rest is sweet and refreshing after having followed the steps of duty all day.' These words were but imperfectly understood by me at that time; but I felt myself particularly refreshed while taking my supper in this place, and never had I before tasted any water so sweet as that which fell from the rock. After having eaten what I wished, I laid myself down on the dry leaves, and slept till daybreak.

"The morning was shed upon the summit of the woods, when I was first roused from my refreshing slumbers

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by a sharp and harsh voice; and when I opened my eyes, I saw the dwarf standing by me. I thought that on this occasion she looked even more disagreeable than she had done the day before; for, as I lay between sleeping and waking, her little dark eyes were fixed upon me in the most forbidding and unpleasant manner. 'Come, come,' said she, 'you have slept long enough,—the birds are singing in the trees,—the rays of the sun have shot up above the hills, and the wild animals of the forest have withdrawn to their dens.'

"I roused myself immediately; but, quick as I thought myself, she became impatient while I was getting ready; yet she waited while I called my brothers,—adding her voice to mine to rouse them. And when we had already set out, she ran before us as on the former day, without pause, making no stop, and forcing herself through every obstacle which presented itself. To effect this, she sometimes stooped or crawled, and sometimes clambered on her hands and knees, with the same obstinate and unwearied perseverance.

"The day before, during our noon-tide repast, Dovera's reproof had for a while silenced Otioso; and in consequence, during the morning, he only indulged himself in low mutterings, but these he by no means spared.

"At noon-day, after having walked several hours, we arrived at a cottage in the very centre of a deep and tangled copse, where our guide having knocked, a door was opened by a little figure, who seemed the exact counterpart of our guide, and altogether quite as little inviting in her appearance. Dovera accosted her by the name of Labour, and the two friends embraced each other with such cordiality that my idle brother, namely, Otioso, fell to laughing, and that so loudly, that if they had been liable to be easily offended, we should certainly have lost a treat which was soon afterward unexpectedly provided for us. For when these salutations were completed, the dwarf informed us that our hour of rest was arrived, and directed us to take our places on the grass, where presently the good woman of the cottage set before us such a repast as for exquisiteness of flavour excelled all we had ever before tasted; the materials indeed of which it was composed were of the commonest kind, but they were all so well prepared, so hot, and so neatly arranged on the grass, that even Otioso expressed himself pleased, and Avaro

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would not have left a fragment on a single dish, had not our little guide suddenly risen, when she thought we had had enough, and recommenced her journey.

"We did not, however, forget to pay our compliments to our kind hostess before we took our leave. And when we were fairly set out again, Otioso said to Dovera, 'For once you have been an excellent guide, for we have had a better dinner to thank you for to-day than we shall easily find again, I fear, in these wilds.'

"'You did not then expect,' replied the dwarf, 'that I and my friends understood the arts of cookery so well? I am not one indeed who promises much. I neither please at first sight, nor excite high expectations; but I may not be the worse for that. Many fairer spoken persons are not so well liked in the long run.'

"Towards the afternoon, we had come to the edge of the wood in which we had been so long entangled, and being on a rising ground, there suddenly opened to us a scene, where, for the first time within my remembrance, I saw ranges of buildings, forming vast cities, with glittering fanes and embattled walls and gateways; there also we beheld rivers flowing through fertile meadows, abounding with cattle, corn-fields, vineyards, and orchards, with farm-houses scattered here and there over the varied landscape;—the whole being backed with one mighty range of hills, whose snowy summits poured forth a thousand rills, which spread in every direction.

"Our guide stopped one minute here to allow us to admire this new and beautiful scene: and then she passed hastily forward through a long avenue of fruit-trees. We were very strongly tempted to stop every moment to pluck the fruit; for this, however, Dovera would allow us no opportunity, for she continued trotting forward, perpetually calling upon us to keep up with her. I must say that on this occasion I felt almost as angry with her as my brothers were. The fruit grew on the highest branches of the trees, and it was not to be obtained without delay; to have indulged ourselves would therefore have obliged us to give up the benefit of our guide; yet being still doubtful what that benefit might prove which we were to derive from her guidance, we could not resolve to renounce the gratification of tasting the delightful fruit which hung so temptingly from the lofty trees beneath which we were passing,

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without using some efforts at persuasion. Accordingly we failed not to expostulate with her; and as I had never thwarted her in any way before, I now thought I would try my powers of persuasion, hoping that my complaisance had in some degree won her favour.

"I therefore began by speaking of the beauty of the fruit, and asking her what kind she supposed it to be.

"'You are wishing for some,' she replied, 'but I cannot stop for you while you indulge your appetite. Your present business is to seek your father's doves; and my business is to direct you in your way. I am willing to fulfil what I have undertaken, but you are not to expect me to accommodate myself to your caprices. If you choose to perform the parts of monkeys or apes, and mount the trees to fill yourselves with the fruit, you are at liberty to do so; but understand, I wait not for you.'

"'Well then,' I said, 'I suppose we must submit. We should certainly have relished some of the fruit which hangs so attractively over our heads; but after all, it may be better for us to pursue our business, and wait for the fruit till our work is done.'

"'There is no maybe in the case,' replied the dwarf; 'and a very ordinary degree of understanding might lead you to decide on that point without my assistance.'

"'What is the use,' said Otioso, 'of arguing with persons who seem quite deaf to reason, and utterly incapable of entering into the feelings of others?' And then he vented his indignation, in a manner which I thought so provoking to the dwarf, that I was almost afraid she would refuse to guide us any farther. However, she went on, and took no notice of any thing we might choose to say.

"We continued our journey as the day before, till sunset, and slept in the open air, as during the former night. It was in a meadow, under the shade of some tall trees, that we slept; and near us was a fold for sheep, the bleatings of which, together with those of the lambs, and the barkings of the shepherd's dog, were the only sounds which broke the silence of the night.

"We had nothing for our supper but some of the cakes which our mother had prepared, with a few dried raisins; however, this supper seemed particularly delightful to me, for I was hungry, and the sleep which I afterward enjoyed on the green herb was as refreshing as any I had ever experienced.

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"We had expected that our third day's journey would bring us to one of the cities which we had seen the evening before. But not so. Our guide led us over a great heath, where we met only a few travellers, some of whom passed us without making any observations, while others hooted after us, and asked us whither we were going in such post-haste, and what sort of animal we had picked up for a guide.

"We dined on this heath from what we had in our wallets, together with some walnuts which had fallen from the tree under which we sat.

"At night we took shelter in a shed, and there, while we supped, my brothers entered into discourse with each other and with our guide.

"'And pray,' said Otioso, 'my good damsel, when do you suppose that our journey is to be at an end?'

"'When you have found what you are seeking,' she replied.

"'And when is that likely to be?' said Otioso; 'for I do not see that we are now any nearer the end of our journey than we were when we first set out.'

"'I do not wonder at that,' replied our guide, 'for I have no great opinion of your discernment.'

"'You have not!' returned Otioso; 'but I care not much what you think of me; yet tell me, are we nearer the place where the doves are to be found than when we set out?'

"'You are still so far off,' she replied, 'that were you to turn back now, you would lose your labour.'

"'Very short indeed!' answered Otioso.

"'I do not profess to make fine speeches,' she replied; 'but this I will say, if you follow me far enough, you will find what you have lost.'

"'Far enough!' he answered; 'you might venture to promise so much, no doubt. But when will you say that we have gone far enough?'

"'When you have found what you have lost; and you will find that when you have done all I require of you,' she answered.

"'Does our way lie through any towns, or public haunts of men?' asked Avaro.

"'It is wherever I may choose to lead you,' she answered.

"'You may lead us, I suppose, where you please,' returned Otioso.

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"'No,' she answered; 'I am not capricious. Had you observed the face of the heavens when you first set out, you might have been convinced, before this time, that I have always directed my course to one certain point.'

"'True,' replied Otioso; 'but, to be plain with you, we should be ashamed to be seen with you in the streets of any town.'

"'I am sorry for it,' returned she; 'you must cease to be ashamed of me, or I never shall be able to restore to you what you have lost.'

"'Then,' returned Otioso, 'I fear we shall never have what we want; for as to ceasing to be ashamed of your guidance, I doubt that will never happen.'

"'Come, come, Otioso,' I said, 'enough of this. Are we not obliged to Dovera for what she has already done for us? I, for my part, have made up my mind, and I do hope that I shall be able to keep my resolution, to follow her as far as she is willing to lead me.'

"We were sitting at the door of the shed, and it was moonlight. Dovera was placed opposite to us; and at the moment I spoke, my eye fell upon her, and I fancied I observed a change in her countenance. I thought she smiled, and looked graciously upon me. But how was it possible for any smile to illuminate features so coarse and forbidding as those she wore? The moonbeams, however, were not resting steadily on her face, for they passed between the branches of a tree, and in consequence played upon her figure as the leaves were moved by the breeze. I was, however, startled at the momentary effect of the smile I had seen, and endeavoured to catch the same appearance again, but it did not recur.

"During the whole of our journey I had slept well; and my sleep this night was, if possible, sweeter and more refreshing than before, though my brothers complained that they did not find their rest equally undisturbed.

"The sixth morning of our journey at length arrived. Dovera called us, as usual, and we set out. At noonday we stopped to rest and refresh ourselves, and soon after came within view of a large town, at sight of which my brothers seemed troubled, and falling a little behind, began to talk apart with each other. Our guide, however, went on as usual, my brothers keeping only a little behind; till at length, coming to a green and beau-

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tiful orchard, just without the walls of the city, we saw a company of young people dancing to the sound of music.

"'We must stop and see this,' said Otioso. 'Indeed we must;' and he called on the dwarf to halt.

"'Your business is not here,' she replied; 'come on —I wait not for you.'

"While Otioso was speaking, we were surrounded by a company of young men and women, gayly clad, and crowned with flowers; one of whom, in particular, seized upon the speaker, and endeavoured to drag him into the midst of them.

"I will not say how hard I pleaded with him, nay, how I struggled to retain him; but he forced himself from me; and at the same moment my attention was distracted, by observing that my eldest brother was deep in conversation with an old man wearing a long beard, and carrying an immense purse, which, being net in open meshes, showed the gold which was within. This old man was tempting him to go with him, shaking his purse in his ears, and making a sort of music which some persons scarcely know how to treat. It was vain for me to cry, 'What are you doing, Avaro? Where are you going, Otioso? Remember our father, remember our mother; think how miserable you will make them; think of the old man's tears; think of our happy home; think of our pleasant garden, and lovely cottage, and our dear doves, which you will never, never see again.' I might as well have addressed the winds, or preached to the raging ocean. My brothers heard not a word I said, the loud peals of laughter raised by the dancing company having the effect to drown my voice entirely.

"After some time spent in this manner, I at length found myself standing where first my brothers left me, with Dovera waiting by my side.

"I was then very young; it will not therefore be wondered at that I should melt into tears, and weep like a babe.

"'But you are kind,' I said, 'Dovera, not to have forsaken me also.'

"'While there was hope of reclaiming your silly brothers, it was no part of my business to leave you,' she said; 'but this hope being past, nothing remains for us to do in this place. Come on, then; and when

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you find the doves, you will also perhaps find one who will be able to do more for these foolish boys than you can effect by waiting with them in this place of danger.'

"'Then,' said I, 'I have an additional reason for wishing to be where the doves are to be found.'

"'You have,' she said.

"'And you will guide me thither?'

"'I will,' she replied. 'Will you give me your hand? for, in the city through which we are about to pass, you will do well to hold me fast.'

"'I will,' I said; and I grasped her small hand in mine. Not at first, I own, without a feeling of reluctance which I could hardly dissemble.

"We entered through a wide gate-way into the town, and had scarcely mingled with the persons walking in the streets, when we were assailed on all sides with such roars of laughter that I was perfectly confounded, and should certainly have lost my guide had I not held her fast; for one pushed us on one side, and one on another, and I was utterly confounded by the remarks which were made all around me.

"'Whom have you got there, young man?' said one. 'You have certainly selected a very elegant and beautiful associate, and there is nothing mean or despicable in her appearance.'—'Are you not afraid lest some one should run away with your prize?' said another, 'for it cannot be questioned that she is a rare and singular beauty.'

"'What a fool the lad must be,' uttered a third and rougher voice, 'to cling so close to that little object;' and a wise-looking old man, at least, one who seemed to be wise in his own conceit, whispered in my ear that I should do well to let the strange little creature go forward, and not make myself ridiculous by walking hand-in-hand with her through the market-place, to be the gaze and laughing-stock of the idler sort.

"'Let her go forward, my son,' he added; 'you will be able to keep your eye upon her, and to observe all her motions, even better than if she were close at hand, and by so doing you will not be suspected to belong to her, and will thus avoid the comments of the people.'

"This last counsel sounded so wisely in my ears, that I insensibly relaxed the grasp with which I had hitherto held the small hand of Dovera; on which she looked up to me and I again caught a passing expression of such

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peculiar interest, that I again grasped her firmly, and we proceeded together with quickened pace. When we came to the market-place, the boys began to mob us, being urged on by the rude comments of their elders, and to pelt us with orange-peel, and call us by many strange names; but, suddenly, the uproar immediately around us became less violent, or rather took another direction: and when I looked up to ascertain what might have been the occasion of this sudden change of circumstances, I beheld a man driving a donkey along the street, which creature he had painted of a green colour, and otherwise strangely metamorphosed, in order, as he proclaimed, to supply the good people of the town with some new subject of discourse.

"The man had chosen an occasion very opportune for me, for this exercise of his ingenuity, though certainly without any particular view of serving me. However, we were soon forsaken by the mob, which passed down in another direction of the streets, laughing and shouting in a manner to me most marvellous, country-bred and ignorant as I was of the ways of great cities.

"'You would have been mighty wise,' said my little guide, as soon as we were fairly left to ourselves, 'to give up the hopes of recovering your father's doves at the instigation of persons like these, who can be diverted from their course by the appearance of a green donkey;" and she laughed heartily as she spoke.

"'Indeed, Dovera,' I said, 'I am surprised to see you so gay. I imagined that you could not laugh.'

"'I can laugh in a proper place,' she replied, 'and with those who are not impatient to be rid of me;' and at the same time she looked up again; and I then distinctly saw that fine expression of countenance, of which, once or twice before, I had obtained a transient glimpse.

"We were so effectually relieved by the man and his green donkey, that we got out of the town without further annoyance; and leaving it behind us, we saw before us a very mountainous region, the greater part of which was clothed with forest trees. The loss of my brothers had made me sad; and, though I was struck with the beauty of the scene before me, I could not refrain my tears when I found myself in this lonely situation, forsaken by all but Dovera.

"We were traversing a long heath in the direction of

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hills. Dovera had never yet begun a conversation with me; but when she observed my sadness, she commenced a sweetly consolatory discourse; assuring me, that as I had so faithfully followed her to the present point, she was not only willing but anxious to bring me through my difficulties.

"'The feeblest instruments, perseveringly used, my dear Pazienzo,' she said, 'are often the most effectual in bringing the afflicted through their troubles; but in the use of these instruments, more humility and patience are necessary than are generally found in young persons; violent efforts, which are soon over, are more congenial to the human mind than long-continued exertions; but he that would do well must set his face like a flint, and pursue one even course through evil report and good report, through weariness and lassitude, through contempt and discouragements.'

"It was dusk when this conversation began, for the shade of the hills before us had produced an early night, and the moon had not risen; the figure of my companion was in consequence obscured, and, as if it were by a sort of charm, while she continued to speak I seemed to lose the recollection of her unpleasing appearance, and to fancy that the creature whose hand I held was in fact as lovely in her form and features as she had become fascinating in her manners; from moment to moment, as the voice of my little friend softened into the sweetest melody, the illusion became stronger; I walked on like one in a dream, being more and more satisfied every instant with my little guide.

"At night, Dovera pointed out a resting-place under a wide-spreading tree, and I had no sooner laid myself down than I fell into a very deep sleep; and, in my sleep, I fancied that I again heard the soft murmurs of the lost doves.

"The voice of Dovera awoke me at dawn. I opened my eyes and looked around me; our shady apartment was fragrant with the odour of many flowers, and there was a sound of rushing waters near at hand.

"The tree under which I lay was bending down with the weight of many ripe citrons; but neither the fragrance of the flowers nor the delicious appearance of the fruit could attract my attention for a moment. I could only look at Dovera, who stood before me. I could only look and wonder,—though clad as formerly,

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she seemed to be a new creature; she was the same, and yet she was not the same; she was changed, and yet she was Dovera still.

"'Why do you look at me,' she said, 'and rub your eyes, and seem so astonished?'

"'Because you are so changed,' I replied.

"'I am not changed,' she answered; 'I am the same; but your feelings towards me are altered.'

"'They certainly are,' I replied: 'but it is because you are different from what you first appeared.'

"'I am not different, I repeat,' answered she; 'but your opinion of me is changed. Did I not tell you that I was one who was never liked on a first acquaintance, yet those who know me well are always attached to me? and to those who take me fairly by the hand, and, for my sake, endure the scorn and contempt of the world, I become so very dear, that many have preferred death to a separation from me.

"'But come,' she added, 'rise up; regale yourself with some of these citrons, and then we must renew our journey. We have many difficulties to surmount this day, and I fear that you will find it very hard to follow me where I must necessarily lead you.'

"I arose immediately, took the refreshment permitted me, and began my journey, resolved to follow my little guide whithersoever she might choose to lead me.

"This was indeed a weary, weary day; yet my companion gave me such encouragement as enabled me to proceed. I might write a volume on the adventures of those few hours. We first passed through a tangled and briery coppice, and then came out into a narrow ravine, paved with sharp stones, up which we climbed for several hours, till at length we found ourselves on the steep side of a mountain, where I slipped back at every step, by reason of the smoothness of the short crisp turf.

"This day we found no place for our noontide meal, and just at dusk I fell down, and struck my temple against one of the sharp angles of a granite rock which protruded itself from the turf like a giant's grave. When I arose I found myself bathed in blood.

"'A few steps more,' said Dovera, 'and we shall find a resting-place:' and she then, in her turn, seized my hand, and drawing me forward, presently brought me to the mouth of a cavern, where she directed me to lie

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down on a bed of moss, while she took a small vial from a little bag she carried on her arm, and poured its contents into my mouth.

"'Oh, Dovera,' I said, 'how refreshing! What have you given me?'

"She made me no answer; but placing herself at my head, and taking the kerchief which braided her hair, she bound up my wounds, and laying my head on her lap, began to sing a soft low air, of such inexpressible melody that I was presently lulled to sleep, notwithstanding the aching of my brow.

"The morning had dawned when I awoke, and I still found my head on the lap of the patient Dovera.

"I lifted myself up and looked at her.—'Dovera,' I said, 'dear Dovera, is it you?'—for she was now so much altered, so improved, that I could hardly believe her to be the same. Much of the sallowness of her complexion had disappeared, and the whole expression of her countenance was changed. She looked many years younger, and her manner was affectionate and kind in the extreme.

"'One more day of severe labour remains, Pazienzo,' she said, 'and then you will need me no more, at least for the purpose for which I offered my services.'

"'Shall you leave me, then, Dovera?' I asked.

"'As you please,' she replied; 'but you do not yet like me well enough to wish me always to be with you?'

"I hesitated: I knew not what to answer.

"'Don't pay compliments,' said she; 'I love the truth.'

"'But I hate my own ingratitude,' I answered; 'I wish I could love you as well as you deserve to be loved;' and the tears came into my eyes as I spoke.

"Dovera smiled. 'Come, Pazienzo,' she said, 'I will not be affronted; and now let us pursue our journey. Be steadfast and persevering, and your labour will be at an end a few hours hence.'

"This was encouraging, and I sprang up. I forgot my bruises, and we pushed boldly on from height to height, till presently we had obtained such an elevation, that the valley through which we had passed two days before showed as if it were in another region.

"It was with inexpressible fatigue that I followed Dovera up these precipices; but I was somewhat con-

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soled when, towards noonday, we came within view of a very beautiful palace, built of crystal, and enriched with a variety of precious stones, which sparkled in the sunbeams with a dazzling splendour. This palace was encompassed with gardens, whose green shades afforded no small refreshment to the eye; and above the portal I could distinguish these words, engraven in letters of gold,—'The Palace of Sophia.'

"I had no sooner read this inscription than I turned to my little guide to express my gratitude; and behold, while I looked upon her, the russet mantle and hood which she wore fell from her, as the brown husk from the ripened chestnut; every defect of her form disappeared—her wrinkles were filled up—her dark complexion became of a dazzling brilliancy—her grizzled hair gave way to tresses of the richest auburn—her eyes became bright and sparkling—her lips as red as coral; and instead of a deformed hag I held in my hand a charming child of ten or twelve years of age, endowed with all those graces which render childhood lovely.

"'Dovera!' I said in amazement. She smiled, and endeavoured to draw away her hand.

"'No, my beloved Dovera,' I said, 'we will now never part. You shall be my friend, my sister, my sweet companion through life!'

"'What!' said she, 'because my skin is fair and fresh, and my eyes are brilliant? What, can you desire me for a companion before you have seen what I have done for you? Did you not come to seek the doves, and have you yet obtained them?'

"I felt myself reproved, and hastened forward to mount the last height which was to bring me to the palace. A few more exertions, weary as I was, effected our purpose, and we at length stood at the golden portal.

"There Dovera, having blown a silver trumpet which hung at the gate, the door was immediately opened, and all the sparkling beauties of the inner court presented themselves to our view.

"Dovera, who was now become the most lovely little creature I had ever seen, had scarcely led me through the gate, before the fairy Sophia, richly decorated and blazing with jewels, approached us from the interior of the palace, followed by a long train of ladies.

"She drew near smilingly, and said, while she caressed my little companion, 'Well done, Pazienzo, you have

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gained the prize. The doves are with me, and I will accompany you to-morrow to take them back to your parents. I would have chided my birds for being so impatient to leave you, had I not rejoiced in the occasion which it has given me of exercising your perseverance. Come now into my palace, and partake of that refreshment of which you stand in so much need.'

"I fell on my knees before the fairy, and kissed the hem of her robe. She endeavoured to lift me up, but I refused to rise till I had pleaded for my brothers.

"'Set your mind at ease with respect to them,' she replied; 'I will take care of them.'

"I then arose, though not till after I had poured forth my many acknowledgments to the fairy.

"I was then led into the palace, where, by the command of our queen, I was taken to a bath by several little pages, who afterward brought me certain rich garments, in which, when I was dressed, I returned to the hall.

"There the fairy permitted me to dine with herself and her ladies; and in the afternoon we all returned to the royal gardens, where we were regaled with a concert of the finest music; the musicians being all birds, whose ravishing voices exceeded every harmony which I could have conceived.

"We were seated on a bank of flowers, among the most charming groves which eye ever beheld. And when the concert was finished, the queen began to question me about Dovera, who, I should say, had never been out of my sight since I had been in the fairy's presence.

"'And so,' said she, 'I understand that you are tired of Dovera, and that you are content to separate yourself from her. Well, it shall be so as you wish; and yet, I think you have no reason to complain of her.'

"On hearing this, I fell at the fairy's feet; 'Ah, lady,' I said, 'in pity remember not against me the hasty words which escaped me during our journey. Do not remind me of my folly and ingratitude. I have associated with Dovera till she is more dear and lovely in my eyes than life itself. My father's house,—the garden where I spent my early days,—the whole earth would be a wilderness to me in the absence of Dovera; hear me, illustrious lady,—condescend to hearken to

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my humble petition. I have no sister: my mother has no daughter; permit us to adopt Dovera into our family, and let us never, never part.' As I spoke, I kissed the fairy's slipper, and sprinkled it with my tears.

"The fairy smiled, and said, 'What, have you followed Dovera till she is become necessary to your happiness? Ah, fortunate Pazienzo,—I predict a happy life in future for you. Take her then for your sister and sweet companion, and be you never parted.' So saying, she called my little friend, and placed her lovely hand in mine, saying, 'Henceforward be as a twin brother and sister, ever united in heart, and having no contrary desires.' The fairy then struck our united hands with her wand, and our friendship was so closely cemented from that moment that it never could be dissolved. Our evening was concluded with rejoicings; and the blaze of our illuminations was seen to the verge of the most distant horizon.

"On the morning of the seventh day since my departure from home, the fairy presented the doves to me in a golden cage; and having caused me, with Dovera, to mount her carriage, which was drawn by golden eagles we presently found ourselves at the gate of my father's garden, where my two brothers were waiting, like beggars, at the door; the elder being covered with rags, and the younger having tasted no food since the moment in which I had parted from him. They were, however, both humble and penitent. The fairy, therefore, forgave them, and permitted them to follow us into the garden, where our aged parents received us in their arms, and wiped away the tears from the eyes of their unhappy sons.

"The fairy staid to dine with us, having commanded her servants to prepare a splendid repast; and, before she parted, opened the door of the golden cage, and gently chiding the doves, commanded them to take possession of their usual haunts.

"From that period the doves have never forsaken us, and my lovely Dovera has been my constant companion. Judge, then, what reason I have had to be contented. But those only can understand the extent of my privileges who are enabled to translate the figurative language of this little tale, and who are willing to pursue

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Dovera through every difficulty through which she thinks it right to lead them."

Note.—Some young readers may, perhaps, find it difficult to understand the hidden meaning of this story. The publishers therefore think it advisable to mention, for the benefit of such as may not have parents or friends to assist them by any explanation, that *Dovera* is an Italian word, and means *duty:* and that the purpose of the tale is to show how pleasant and profitable it is to follow the path of duty, although at first it may seem hard and disagreeable.

END OF THE BIRTH-DAY PRESENT.

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THE

ERRAND-BOY.

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THE

ERRAND-BOY.

A CERTAIN pious gentleman from London, whose name was Bliss, was some time ago visiting at a small town in Worcestershire; and going to church one Sunday morning with his friend, he was much pleased with the appearance of a very neat and modest boy, who came into the church carefully leading by the arm an old woman, who was also neatly dressed, though in very coarse clothing. The old woman and the boy seated themselves on a bench in the aisle, just at the door of the pew in which the stranger was with his friend; and this gave the gentleman an opportunity of observing how very well the boy behaved, how orderly he used his Prayer-book, and how attentive he was all the time of the service. As to the old woman, it seemed that she could not read, as she used no Prayer-book, though her behaviour was very devout.

When service was over, and Mr. Bliss was walking home with his friend, he failed not to ask him about the boy whose appearance at church had attracted his notice; and was answered that he commonly went by the name of Honest Tom the Errand-boy, being well known in the town as a boy that might be trusted. On hearing so good an account of the boy, Mr. Bliss resolved to inquire further into his history: for it happened that at this very time he wanted a person to work under his gardener, and he thought that such a place might suit the boy in question, and that in this manner he might befriend a worthy lad; that is, if Tom, upon inquiry, turned out to be such as he hoped.

With this thought in his mind, Mr. Bliss that same evening inquired out the house where Tom lived with the old woman, who was his grandmother; and was directed into a back part of the town, where was a nar-

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row street, formed on one side by old and shabby houses, and on the other by rick-yards, pig-sties, and little cabbage-gardens.

As Mr. Bliss walked down the street, before the doors of the houses, which were all open, it being very warm weather, he looked into one and another, in order to find the boy or the old woman whom he was seeking. But he had passed half the length of the street without either finding them, or indeed wishing to find them, in such scenes and company as met his eye in many of the houses: for in some he saw young people dressed above their stations, in shabby finery, gossiping round their tea-tables; in others he saw men smoking and drinking; and in others he saw dirty and neglected children. At length, however, he came to a house which, although quite as poor and mean as the other buildings in the row, had an appearance of cleanliness and comfort, which made it look quite different from the rest. The walls, instead of being black with smoke, and hung about with ballads and ugly pictures, looked as if they had been lately washed, and had no ornaments but a few printed hymns, and an old picture of John Bunyan: the bricks which paved the kitchen were swept clean, and the furniture, though very mean, was all in its place. Mr. Bliss stood a while at the door of this cleanly habitation, and looking in, saw those he came to seek, namely, the neat old woman sitting at a round table before the window, and honest Tom by her side, who was just then turning over the leaves of a Bible, no doubt in order to find the place where he had left off reading in the former part of the day.

Mr. Bliss knocked at the door: upon which the old woman, looking up and seeing a gentleman dressed in black, started, and seemed confused; but her grandson, who had been more used to talk to his betters, came forward, and bowing civilly, asked the gentleman what he pleased to want.

"I am a stranger in this town," answered Mr. Bliss; "but having heard a good report of you, I have come to sit with you a little while, and to have some conversation with you upon subjects befitting this day."

Tom seemed a little surprised at being thus spoken to: nevertheless, he offered Mr. Bliss the chair which he had been sitting on; and when the gentleman begged him also to be seated, he very properly refused. Mr.

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Bliss, however, insisted that the old woman should keep her seat.

Mr. Bliss was a man who feared God, and gave much of his goods (for he was a rich man) to feed the poor. He knew their ways well, he felt for all their troubles, and had a way of making his conversation not only very agreeable, but very profitable to them. He now opened his discourse to Tom and his grandmother, by saying how pleased he had been to see them so attentive at church; and thence he went on to point out the advantages of true religion, both to high and low, to rich and poor, to young and old. He was going on, when the old woman interrupted him by saying that she had received such comfort from religion, even in this world, as she should find it hard to describe; "and what it is to do for me in the next," said she, "no tongue can tell, neither can it enter into man's heart to conceive. I lived in the world," added she, "seventy years without religion, and during that time I suffered all manner of troubles. I had one only child, a daughter, whom I brought up without the knowledge of God, and who, after having brought me to much shame, ran away from me in my old age, leaving me to take care of her child, who was then only five years old. All my neighbours know, though I had, as it were, some natural feeling for the child, that I taught him neither the fear of God nor man; but suffered him to go on for several years in all manner of wickedness, while I myself set him the worst of patterns. But it pleased the Lord in a wonderful manner to turn his heart, and to bring him to the knowledge of his duty; and through him I have myself been brought to a better life than what I formerly led, although I am still, in my own opinion, the chief of sinners."

Here Mr. Bliss put a question to the old woman:—"You talk of religion, my good woman, saying that it has made you happy in this world, and that you expect it will make you still more so in the next: now, inasmuch as many in these days talk of religion, and trust to it, who do not understand by any means the root of the matter, will you not be offended if I put one question to you—What are your views of *that religion* by which you are to be saved? Does it consist in keeping God's commandments? Do you expect to be saved because you have reformed your life?"

"No, sir," replied the old woman; "we have a pious

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minister, who puts us right whenever he thinks we have wrong opinions on that subject. It is not in my power to expound the doctrine of salvation in the manner that he does, but I nevertheless think that I understand the meaning of it; and indeed it is so comfortable a doctrine, that I wish every poor creature could understand and receive it. Our minister has taught us, and showed us Scripture to prove his words, that we have all deserved everlasting damnation by our sins, and that there is no way of salvation but by faith in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ; that this faith is the free gift of God, and that good works are the fruits of faith."

"Therefore," said Mr. Bliss, "if you are enabled to do well, you must give the glory to God, and take no credit to yourself."

"Lord, give me grace so to do!" answered the old woman.

"And be very careful," said Mr. Bliss, "that you do not mistake talking for doing; for there is much danger of this in these days, when religion is more in favour and fashion than it was some years back."

"Sir, we must pray for help," replied the old woman.

"We must seek the grace of humility," returned Mr. Bliss: "*Lord, make and keep me humble!* must be our constant prayer."

Mr. Bliss then turned to Tom, saying, "Well, my boy, and can you give me an account of yourself? By what means were you first led to seek the right way? Your grandmother owns that she brought you up entirely in ignorance of religion."

"Sir," replied Tom, "I owe all the good I ever got, under God, to a certain gentleman, and to his Sunday-school: but you shall hear, sir, if you please."

HONEST TOM'S ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF.

"I HAVE lived in this house with my grandmother ever since I can remember, and in a very wretched and miserable manner we lived for many years. My grandmother can tell you what ways we had, and how dirty and filthy our house was. She could earn but little, her health was so bad, and what she did earn we had no notion of putting to the best use; while I was very

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undutiful, affording her neither help nor comfort. So it went on till I was about nine years old; I do not think that in all that time I ever set my foot within a church, or mentioned the name of God, except in oaths and blasphemies. But, as I was saying, when I was about nine years old, my grandmother hurt her leg; and as her own little earnings, together with the small assistance she received from the parish, were not sufficient for our support, I was forced to look about for some employment. I therefore went and stood with some other boys in the market-place, and offered myself to run on errands; for which I was paid at the rate of about twopence a mile, and for shorter turns I never got less than a penny: but as I was exceedingly slow and idle, I seldom had above two or three jobs at most in the day. With the first penny I got each day I used to buy me a penny roll, and whatever else I earned I used to hazard at chuck-farthing, pitch-and-toss, and other such games, with the boys who stood in the market-place with me; and as we could not carry on these games in a full market, I lost many a good job by being out of the way when people were looking for some one to go on their errands.

"During this time, as you may be sure, sir, I grew fast in sin. It is said that ill weeds grow apace; and I am sure my sins at that time grew apace: for I think there was scarce a worse lad than I was at that time in the town. Well, so I went on, without stop or check, till one day a butcher called me, and sent me about a mile out of town with some meat, which I was ordered to deliver before such an hour, it being wanted for dinner. Well, I took the meat, and went strolling along, at the rate of half a mile an hour, stopping to stare at every thing I met, and lounging five or ten minutes on the top of every gate or stile.

"At length, coming into a large high turnip-field, not far from the house to which I was going, I heard some one step briskly behind; and presently a gentleman passed me, dressed, as you now are, sir, in black clothes. This gentleman was presently out of sight of such a poor snail as I was, and I thought no more of him, but crawled on to the house, where I delivered my meat, and got a good scolding from the cook for being past my time.

"About an hour afterward, as I was going slowly back through the same field, having stopped some time to eat

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raw turnips, I was overtaken by the same gentleman, who, slackening his pace to suit himself to my slow movements, began to talk with me thus:—

"'Well, my boy,' said he, 'so we have met again! And where have you been?'

"When I had told him, and pointed out the chimneys of the house to which I had carried the meat, 'And you have been all this time,' said he, 'creeping along to that house, which is not a hundred yards behind us! Pray, my boy, are you paid for going on these errands?'

"'To be sure I am,' said I; 'how else am I to live?'

"'Well,' said the gentleman, 'if you have no other means of living but by going on errands, and if you always are as idle and slow in your motions as you have been to-day, no wonder that you have no feet to your stockings, no soles to your shoes, no sleeves to your shirt, a coat all in slits, your knees through your trousers, and but half a brim to your hat. Come, my boy, let us reckon: can you count?'

"'Yes, sir,' I replied, 'a little:' for I had learned to count at chuck-farthing.

"'How are you paid for going on errands?—by your time, or by the length of the way?' said the gentleman.

"'I am paid,' said I, 'twopence when I go a mile out of town, fourpence if I go two miles, a penny if I go half a mile, and a half-penny if I run the length of the street.'

"'Well,' said the gentleman, 'if you were to make the best of your time, how many twopenny errands could you run in a day? You ought, if you were a diligent boy, to go two miles, that is, one in and one out of town, in an hour, and that moving only at an easy foot's pace: accordingly, if you had constant employment, how many twopences might you gain in a day?'

"'Why, sir,' I answered, 'according to your reckoning, I might run ten twopenny errands a day, if I was working all day.'

"'And how much, in that case, should you gain a day?' said the gentleman.

"'Why, twenty pence, sir,' I answered.

"'Twenty pence,' said the gentleman, 'is one shilling and eight pence: but allowing that so small a boy as you could not well run so many miles in one day, we will say that you could only earn one shilling aday, allowing time for rest and eating your meals. One

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shilling aday makes six shillings a week; and six shillings a week would provide you with feet to your stockings, a clean shirt on a Sunday, a whole coat, shoes with soles, and a hat with a brim: and more than that, you would have a little money to spare for your father and mother, if they chance to want help; since it is the duty of children, as soon as they are able, to help their parents.'

"I answered somewhat sulkily, 'I have neither father nor mother.'

"The gentleman then asked me more concerning my situation in life, and my family; after which he told me, in a very kind manner, that he had a school where he attended every Sunday to instruct little boys in reading and serving their God, and that if I would come next Sunday, I should be taught to read, and be taken to church.

"The gentleman then gave me twopence, and walked on, leaving me to consider what he had proposed. And I remember well that I sat me down on the next stile, to think upon what had been said to me, and to consider whether I had not best follow the gentleman's advice.

"Now, sir, I cannot tell you whether I then resolved to follow his advice or not: for at that time I was as stupid as the beasts that eat the grass; I thought of nothing but my belly, and how to fill that. However, when Sunday came, having, as it happened, no errand to go upon, I went lounging to the Sunday-school: and going in without making a bow, or pulling off my ragged hat, I went near to the good gentleman, and nodding my head at him (for I had no kind of notion of manners at that time, or of the respect due to my betters), I took my place on a form by some other boys. No notice was taken of me for some time: at length, the gentleman called me up with a parcel of the smallest boys in the school; and after giving me a card on which the A B C, both large and small, was printed, he talked to us all some time about religion, giving me the very first notions I ever had of the value of my soul, of the pleasures of heaven, the danger I was in of going to hell, and my need of a Saviour.

"We were then called to put on our hats for church; when my good master told me I might take my card home with me, and that I must learn my letters at any odd hours I could find during the week.'

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"I made the common excuse, that I had no time. To which he answered by taking a shining silver sixpence out of his pocket, and holding it before me—'This,' he said, 'shall be yours when you can say all your letters backwards and forwards.'

"We were then led to church, where I sat like a wild beast just caught, staring here and there, and contriving how I should get out; but I fancied the parson was watching me, and this made me afraid to stir.

"Well, sir, I learned most part of my letters the following week, getting an old woman who sold apples and plums in the market to give me a little help in my learning; in return for which I did her some little kind turn or other. It happened this week, that the two boys with whom I had been accustomed to play at pitch-and-toss were gone out of town; so that I was left to myself more than usual, which was much in my favour, and for which, among many other greater and lesser mercies of God, I have great reason to be thankful.

"I had learned most of my letters by the next Sunday, and so went a second time to the Sunday-school, which I should not have done had I not been induced to do so by the hope of reward. I got my silver sixpence, however, and went full of delight to church.

"I cannot say that the good things I heard at school or at church had as yet taken hold of my heart; or if it was so, I knew it not; for on week-days I went on just in my old way, excepting that I sometimes looked at the cards which were given me to learn. But otherwise I was the same idle swearing boy, and indeed every thing that was bad; and as for my poor old grandmother, I generally left her to shift for herself, going out in a morning, and never returning till night. But still I was allured to school, sometimes by one lit'le reward which was held out to me, and sometimes by another: so that I went to the Sunday-school for more than three months without staying away once. And in this time I had heard so much of the Scripture, that even then I obtained some notion of the great doctrines of our holy religion.

"I now knew that there was a difference between good and bad people, and could form some notion of what it was to be holy and pious. I knew to what account all the wickedness I saw about me in the market was to be placed, namely, to the depravity of man's nature; and

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though I had not formed any desire to be good myself, yet I had learned to respect those who were so. I had also obtained some little knowledge of the Saviour, though indeed it was very inconsiderable.

"But now, as the Sunday-school was no longer a new thing, I began to feel weary of it; and being one Sunday spoken sharply to, I resolved to go thither no more, though my heart smote me when I made that resolution.

"The Sunday after I had left the school was the day before our town races, when it was the custom for all the light people of the lower orders to walk out upon the course, to see the booths and stands prepared for the company. I joined this vain multitude, and spent my evening among a set of people who were drinking, swearing, and using all manner of bad language. I had no pleasure this evening; but, on the contrary, was so miserable and dissatisfied with myself and everybody about me, that I got into a quarrel with a boy larger than myself, who, having beaten me severely, left me bleeding on the ground.

"One of the great mercies of my life," continued honest Tom, "has, I think, been this—that whenever I have attempted to engage in any particular wickedness, almost immediate punishment has followed. I went home sorely bruised; where, instead of comfort, I got a scolding from my grandmother, who was to have the trouble of washing the blood and dust from my clothes. But my punishment did not end here: the next day I went on the race-course again, with all the rabble of the town, at the time of the sport; and being sore with the bruises I had received the day before, and not able to make my way with the rest of the crowd, I was thrown down and trampled upon by a horse. In this state I was carried home, and put to bed, where I suffered extremely from pain of body, violent fever, and want.

"I lay ill nearly the whole of the next winter. In the spring, however, I took my place again in the market; for although I was hardly able to run on an errand from great weakness, yet I was forced to seek employment, being almost starving, and my grandmother, who was very old, not being able to do any thing for me.

"People, seeing how ill I looked, and that I really could not carry any weight, passed me over for a time, and

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called the sturdier lads to carry their baskets: but at length I was hired by a lady to carry a letter about two miles into the country, with the promise of sixpence when I came back. I set out; but whereas I formerly went slowly from wanton idleness, I now was often forced to stop and rest from downright weakness: and I assure you, sir, I made many sad reflections upon the manner in which I had formerly employed my health and strength.

"On arriving at the house, and delivering my letter, the mistress, seeing how ill I looked, gave me something to eat and drink, for which I was most truly thankful. I then set off on my return, but found myself so exceedingly weary, as obliged me to sit down to rest myself by the way. I was then in a lane, which, from being little passed through, was grown quite over with grass; and the hedges were full of spring-flowers, which I thought smelt very sweet after the close air which I had so long breathed in my sick-room, and in the market and shambles where I had stood in order to be hired. Many sweet birds were singing in the May-bushes over my head, and I saw far away, over the bars of a gate right before me, an exceeding fine country, with many hills which rose high towards the heavens.

"As I sat, or rather lay, on the grass, with my back against the bank, looking on this pleasant prospect, I began to call over in my mind many things I had heard at the Sunday-school; and particularly I thought over what I had heard of heaven, how much more glorious and beautiful it is than the most pleasant parts of this world. Then I remembered how my master used to tell the boys that Christ has opened a way to heaven, by which poor sinners may obtain everlasting happiness. Then I thought how miserable I had lately been, and how my misery had been caused by my leaving the Sunday-school, and breaking the Sabbath.

"While I was thinking of all these things, I heard some one stepping along; and, behold, it was the only friend I had in the world,—the gentleman who kept the Sunday-school. I got up and spoke to him.

"At first he did not know me; but when he did recollect me, he made me tell him why I had left the Sunday-school, why I looked so ill, and wherefore I was following my old practice of lounging and idling about.

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"I told him every thing that had happened to me, and hid nothing from him; my troubles, by God's blessing, having made me more desirous of obtaining the good-will of good persons than I formerly had been; for before my illness, I was hardened, and stubborn, and self-confident; but now I was made to feel the want of a friend.

"When the gentleman had heard all I had to say, he took occasion to point out the dreadful nature of sin in destroying both soul and body; assuring me that almost any poor boy, however forlorn, however friendless, in this happy Christian country, has it in his power to make his way respectably in the world, if he will but follow God as his guide. 'There are not many boys,' said he, 'who have fewer friends than you have; yet I took pains, my lad, to show you, when I saw you the first time, that if you would follow your business with diligence as an errand-boy, you might soon earn for yourself every thing requisite to a decent appearance; and I also pointed out to you that a place of education was prepared for you, in which, with diligence, you might acquire as much learning as a poor man can ever want in order to make him a good Christian. Thus,' added he, 'there is nothing to hinder your becoming a respectable man, but *sin;* and sin, if indulged, in whatever situation a man may be, will destroy both his comfort in this world and his hopes of happiness in the next; high and low, rich and poor, young and old, none can be happy who allow themselves to live in sin. Boys and girls, who are deceitful, liars, idle in their business, disobedient to their parents and masters, think it strange if they do not thrive and prosper, and are not happy in the world; but no one ever can or ever will be happy who does not strive to please God, and serve him, in whatever state or condition he may be placed.'

"He talked much more to me on this subject. After which he pointed out to me that I must never attempt to do any thing well without God's help; informing me that it is the work of the Holy Spirit of God to make the heart of man clean, and to fit it for bringing forth good deeds. He made me likewise to understand by whom and through whom I must needs seek the blessing of God: and these things he laid down in so clear and plain a manner, that the most ignorant creature could hardly have mistaken him. He taught me, more-

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over, that, as a Christian, I must never dare to call upon God the Father, but in the name of God the Son; and that the chief blessing I was to seek for was, the help and direction of God the Spirit. 'For,' said he, 'if any man seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all other things will be added unto him.' Matt. vi. 33.

"The kind gentleman finished his discourse by giving me a shilling, seeing that I really was at that time too weak to work for my living: and so, saying that he hoped he should see me the next Sunday at the school, he walked away, leaving me to think over what he had said.

"One part of his speech had, by God's blessing, taken especial hold of my mind; and that was, what he had said about prayer: and I was led immediately, no doubt by the Holy Spirit of God, to put his advice in practice. For, having looked this way and that, to see if I was quite alone, I knelt down on the grass, and prayed, not with my lips only, but with my heart. It was indeed but a poor prayer; yet, being offered in the name of the dear Saviour who died for us upon the cross, I doubt not but, for his sake, it was heard and accepted: for, from that time I have been wonderfully helped in my poor endeavours. I cannot, I am sure, tell how, but things have gone on wonderfully well with me since I have been led to seek the Lord: not, I can truly say, from any good in myself; for, O sir, the Lord has opened to me the wickedness of my heart, and made me sensible, that if I had my deserts, I should now be lamenting my condition where hope can never come.

"But, to go on with my story.—The next Sunday I went to school; and there the good gentleman gave me a spelling-book, advising me, as I stood in the market waiting for custom, to be conning over my lesson. I followed this good advice, and the next day brought out my book with me. Some laughed at me, particularly the lads with whom I had been used to play at pitch-and-toss. But the old woman I before mentioned encouraged me not to mind them, kindly giving me all the help she could in my learning; and many a hard word she has put me in the way of making out, which I never could have blundered out by myself. And, as one good turn deserves another, so I had it in my power often to run on little errands for her, or to watch her fruit when

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she was obliged to be absent on any occasion. So there grew a mighty good-will between us, which was far more to my advantage than hers, as she was a woman who feared God, and of a profitable conversation, though compelled, for her livelihood, to sit among the ungodly.

"By my attention on week-days, I made agreat progress in my reading, and pleased my master so well, that the following Christmas he gave me a Bible, together with a new suit of clothes to attend church in; all a free gift, excepting two shillings, which I had saved and put towards the purchase. And more than this: people who came to look for an errand-boy, when they saw me so diligent at my book, doubted not but that I should be equally diligent at my work; upon which I was often chosen to run on an errand, when the other boys were neglected. So that in a little time, by being quick in going my errands, and punctual, as to time and place, in delivering whatever was put under my care, I got such a name, that when any one was wanted on these occasions, I was sure to be chosen before twenty others. If any fish was to be sent to a gentleman's house to be dressed for dinner, the fish-woman always looked for me; saying that she had got a bad name, and lost custom, through the carelessness of errand-boys. 'For, after promising,' she would say, 'that the fish should be sent exactly at such an hour, it is so provoking, through the carelessness of some idle lad, to have it brought in, perhaps, an hour too late, allowing no time to cook it for dinner! But I know that I can trust you, Tom; therefore I shall send you on my errands whenever I can catch you.'

"Thus jobs came upon me so fast, one after another, that it was surprising how much money I earned. And now, being in full prosperity, I was in danger of being lost again through self-satisfaction, and looking to self as the cause of my well-doing, rather than to God. But my kind friend the good gentleman, seeing, perhaps, some signs of this, took occasion to show me my danger, and to point out to me, that the moment man, woman, or child, when doing well, fails to give the glory to God, that person is in danger, not only of ceasing to do well, but of falling into gross and grievous sin, and of becoming, perhaps, tenfold more the child of hell than he ever was before. This warning was a very needful one, as I afterward found, and it saved me, no

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doubt, by God's blessing, from ruining myself through my own conceit.

"I had now but little time for reading, except on Sundays; which, when my master understood, he gave me a little text-book, in which all the sweet promises of God to his saints are set down in a small print. This he directed me to carry in my pocket, learning a verse or so as I went along; and of all the things I ever did in my life, I think this was the most profitable and pleasant to me. Few days passed that I had not a walk out, maybe a mile, maybe two, into the country; and I cannot describe how sweet some of these walks have been made to me, as I went along repeating these texts, and looking around me on all the wonderful works of God: indeed, it has sometimes seemed to me, on these occasions, as if I were talking with God himself. I could now no longer pretend to say that I had no time for prayer; for I found it was my own fault if I did not spend almost all my working-hours in pious exercises: at any rate, it was not my calling, but my wicked heart, which, for the most part, interrupted my prayers.

"Now, though I could not stand to read, as I had done when I had fewer errands to run, yet, by studying the verses I spoke of, I found that I got on quite as fast with my learning as I did before: for my master directed me, when I had learned a verse by rote, to study the sense of it; then, as it were, to turn it into a prayer; and if time would serve, to call over the passage word by word, and try to make out the spelling. And it is surprising in this way how well acquainted I became with certain parts of Scripture, and how many verses I had in my head; and I wish I might say in my heart also.

"When I had in this manner mastered the reading of Scripture, my master gave me a Prayer-book, and put me in a class where I was taught the use of it; he also took upon himself to explain the meaning of our prayers, and services, and church-catechism, advising me at the same time to go to an evening school to learn writing and ciphering.

"Thus he led me on from one thing to another, till I was fourteen years of age; at which time I could earn by running on errands as much as twenty pence a day, that is, at the rate of two pence a mile; for I thought nothing of ten miles in and out in a day. And now,

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having such handsome incomings, my master reminded me that it was my duty to endeavour to do something for my grandmother; telling me at the same time that we ought to live in a more decent way at home than we had been accustomed to do. He also called on my grandmother, and talked to her about her soul; and persuaded me to buy her some decent clothes to come to church in; for, I am sorry to say, she had been for many years a stranger to church.

"My grandmother was mightily pleased when I brought her the new gown which I had purchased for her; and I was almost as much pleased to see her in it as she could be to wear it. So, what with one thing, and what with another, she was at length persuaded to go to church; and from that time has been a regular churchgoer, and not without hearing there what she has found profitable both to soul and body—"

Here the old woman interrupted her grandson; and addressing herself to Mr. Bliss, said, "Good sir, my grandson indeed speaks nothing but the truth, when he tells you that I found in the house of God what has proved profitable both to soul and body. As I said before, during the former part of my life I lived altogether, as too many do, in the service of the Evil One: if I worked, it was only to fill my belly, without any thought of a godly or decent livelihood; what I earned, I ate and drank, without any forethought or thankfulness; and when I could not work, I either starved or trusted to the parish. Thus it was with me all my life, sometimes a feast and sometimes a fast; and I had no heart to clean my house or mend my clothes, for indeed every thing like economy was painful to me. But since my mind has been made easy by religion, and my hopes have become settled and stayed upon God, every duty has become pleasant to me, and every meal, if it were but a crust of bread, sweet to me. And then I have had great comfort in my grandson," continued the old woman, "who, under God, I must say was the first to excite in me a regard for religion; for on observing the change it had made in him, I thought, Surely there must be something more in religion than I once imagined, if it can make youth, which is naturally wild and all for self, so solid and so much for serving and pleasing other folks, as our Tom has become. And then, when he bought me the gown all out of his own savings, how could I refuse to go with

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him in it to church? You know, sir, that would have been impossible."

"Impossible, indeed," said Mr. Bliss; "and here I would take occasion to point out to you, my good woman, how particularly kind the Almighty has been to you: for whereas some are drawn to God by sore troubles and afflictions, he has drawn you by the bands of love, and made your own dear child the instrument of your conversion."

"Sir," said the old woman, "I pray that God may give me a thankful heart."

Mr. Bliss then turned to Tom, and said, "Well, my good lad, let me now hear the end of your story."

"Sir," replied Tom, "I have little more to say: I am still an errand-boy; though, thank God, I obtain a very good maintenance both for myself and grandmother. Two or three places have indeed been offered me in tradesmen's houses, seeing I can now write and cast accounts; but as the families were such as I did not quite like, I rather chose to continue in my present way of life; and my grandmother, too, was not willing that I should leave her."

"Well, Tom," said Mr. Bliss, "you verify an old saying of mine, that no one who has time and health ought to call himself poor. To be sure, there are some hard cases, when work is not to be had; and in these cases persons are much, very much to be pitied: but idleness and a desire to live above our station are the two chief causes, I believe, of poverty. However, God forbid that I should be hard in judging the indigent; I wish, at least, that all poor orphan boys would take you for a pattern, my honest Tom."

"Rather say, sir," said Tom, "that you wish all poor orphan boys might find such a friend as my good master."

"And we must pray also in behalf of all poor children," said Mr. Bliss, "that when the Almighty sends them good advisers, they may have grace to profit by them."

"True, sir," said Tom; "'tis God that must make the people willing in the day of his power."

Mr. Bliss now rose up to take his leave, thanking Tom for his story, and promising to come and see him again before he left the country.

Mr. Bliss was much pleased with Tom's account of

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himself; and having learned the name of his friend, the good master of the Sunday-school, he went the next day to inquire if what the boy had related were true. The testimony of this gentleman to the character of Tom was so satisfactory that Mr. Bliss, before he left the country, offered Tom the place of his under-gardener—an offer which he accepted with the utmost thankfulness.

In a few weeks honest Tom entered the service of Mr. Bliss, and was settled, with his aged grandmother, in a neat and pleasant cottage, which that good gentleman had formerly built for Tom's predecessor.

In this cottage, with fourteen shillings a week, Tom enjoyed as much happiness as a Christian can taste on earth; and it is very certain that none but Christians ever are happy, whatever worldly folks may say to the contrary. This cottage was parted from Mr. Bliss's garden and pleasure-grounds only by a small field and a running brook; and in consequence commanded a prospect of the many beautiful trees and shrubs which adorned Mr. Bliss's premises. It was also scarcely a stone's throw from the parish church, in which the Gospel was preached to the poor by a very godly minister. Tom soon learned the business of a gardener, in which he shortly took a special delight; while in the sweet solitudes of his master's garden he found many opportunities of meditating on his little book of promises.

The last we heard of honest Tom the errand-boy was, that he was promoted to the office of parish clerk, and that he had the pleasure of first taking his place under the desk in the presence of the good gentleman who had formerly turned his thoughts towards religion, and who had come over on purpose from his own town to see him, and to thank Mr. Bliss for his kindness to him.

Thus Tom found by experience that "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Tim. iv. 8.

END OF THE ERRAND-BOY.

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THE

ORPHAN BOY.

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THE

ORPHAN BOY.

There is in the north of Scotland, in a very deep valley, a little village, in which there are about ten cottages and a small church; but the minister who preaches in this church does not live in the village, having another church and a house at some distance.

In this village there dwelt a poor widow, who had one little son. She had been the wife of a soldier, who was killed in battle. This widow feared God, and it was her wish to live long enough to bring up her little son in the same holy way: but it pleased God to order it otherwise; for when little James was only three years of age his mother was taken ill, and died in a few days, leaving her little boy a helpless orphan.

The body of the poor woman was kept to be buried till the Sunday, when the clergyman always attended; and the poor little orphan never left the side of the coffin till it was put into the grave and covered with earth.

After the funeral, before the poor people left the churchyard, they consulted with each other what was to be done with the child: "for the poor baby," they said, "must not be left to want. He has lost his own parents, and we must now all be parents to him." Several of the poor people offered to take him, and provide for him to the best of their power; others said, "We are all poor; it is not therefore fit that the whole charge of him should be laid upon any one family: let us all do something for him, according to our means, and, with God's blessing, he will do very well."

This advice pleased everybody, and each person began to say what he or she would do for him.

"I," said Mary Burns, "will give him house-room."

"And I," said Meggy Macknight, "will spin him a coat every year."

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"And I," added Sandy Roberts, "will make his shoes."

"And he shall have his porridge from me," said another.

"And his buttermilk and cakes from me," said another.

"And I," said another, "will wash his clothes and mend his linen."

So one undertook one thing, and one another, and the poor people seemed comforted and pleased, to think that they had contrived so well for the fatherless child. So they called little James to them, and all returned to their own homes, excepting one little old woman, called Martha, who remained crying on the side of the grave.

This woman was a widow, and lived in a very little hut at the end of the village. She was very poor, and scarcely earned enough to keep herself alive by spinning; for she was old and infirm, and her eyesight was becoming very dim. This poor widow sat by the grave, and looking upon it, she said, "Ah! poor corpse, thou canst not hear me speak! thou canst not see my tears! thou canst not hear my moanings for thy little one! and thou canst never know how it troubles me that I can do nothing for thy orphan babe!

The poor old woman then wiped her eyes with her blue apron, and falling on her knees on the fresh turf, "O Lord God," she said, "I now lift up my prayer to thee, in the name of thy Son, who died for me upon the cross, and I earnestly beseech thee, in that name, that thou wilt teach me, by thy holy Spirit, in what way I may be useful to the poor child whose mother's grave is now before me. But forgive me, O Lord," she added, "if I do wrong in making this prayer; thy will in every way, not mine, be done. If it is not thy will to make me useful to the babe, O raise him up a better friend!"

The old woman, having finished her prayer, sat down again by the grave, and began again to consider what she could do for the child.

"I cannot read," she said, "nor have I any books; but do I not know many chapters of the Bible, and many texts off book? and cannot I teach these chapters to this little one?—they may comfort and profit him hereafter."

Then she remembered these words of the apostle, which he spake to the man who sat at the beautiful gate

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of the temple, *Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee.* Acts iii. 6.

Then was the old woman very much encouraged, when she found that there was a way in which she might be useful to the orphan boy, and she believed that her prayer had been already heard. So she arose, and left the grave, being full of sweet and joyful thoughts.

Now it happened that Mary Burns's cottage, where the little boy was to lodge, was only a few steps from Martha's hut; and Mary Burns was always ready to do any kindness to old Martha, who, notwithstanding her very great poverty, was much honoured in the village.

So when Martha told Mary Burns that she wished the little orphan might come to her hut for an hour or two every day, the request was attended to.

Little James came that very evening, and sat on a three-legged stool in the chimney-corner, while Martha taught him an easy verse, and explained it to him. His little heart was full of his mother, and he asked old Martha where she was gone, and when he should see her again. And this gave the pious old woman occasion to tell him of heaven, and to talk to him about the Lord Jesus Christ, through whose grace alone sinners, such as we all are, can be received into heaven. For it is written, *Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.* Acts iv. 12.

Old Martha wished that she had any thing to give the little boy, in order to win his affections, and to allure him to her hut: but, without any help of this sort, God so blessed her endeavours to gain his love, that, before he went away, he put his arms round her neck, and kissed her, and promised her that he would come again.

Before Martha lay down in her bed that night, she thanked God for having so blessed the beginning of her endeavours to serve little James, and besought him to continue his blessing upon all her little attempts to do him good. The next morning James appeared again, bringing with him a pitcher of buttermilk and some cakes which had been given him, and saying that he was come to stay all day with her, and to hear more stories. So she taught him another verse, and told him more stories about such things as she hoped would profit him.

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So he continued to come many days, and she taught him many texts, and even whole chapters, repeating them to him while she was spinning. She taught him also to say his prayers, to hate a lie, and to know where to ask for help to do well, even from the Spirit of God.

It was very pleasing to see old Martha and little James sitting together in the long winter evenings, when the wind was whistling round the hut, and the snow and sleet were beating against it; for in that northern country it is extremely cold. They were very happy on such occasions; which Martha improved by teaching James to knit and to wind thread, as well as to repeat many chapters.

As James grew older, he was employed during the daytime in doing work out of doors: sometimes in keeping a few sheep and goats, belonging to the village, on the sides of the hill; sometimes in driving away the birds from the gardens or corn-fields; sometimes in helping to plough; and sometimes in harvest work; but he spent all his evenings with Martha, whom he called his grandmother.

In this manner the time passed away till James was eleven years old, at which period a rich gentleman travelling that way, and taking a fancy to James, who was a fine-looking boy, offered to take him to London, and to make his fortune.

When this offer was made for the poor boy, some of his friends in the village were for accepting it, and others were against it; but Martha and Mary Burns, who loved him best, quite disapproved of it.

"London, I have heard," said Martha, "is a place of great trial for young people; and we know not," said she, "whether this great gentleman is a man who fears God or not, or whether he will consider the soul of the poor child. And though James might become a rich man by going to London, yet *what is a man profited, if, he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?* Matt. xvi. 26. Therefore let me beg that he may not be sent from us. He is an orphan; we have taken the care of him; and if any evil befall him through our indiscretion, we shall have much to answer for."

In this manner the pious old woman discoursed with her neighbours; but as there were more persons in the village who were for James's going to London than for

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his being kept at home, Martha's advice was not followed, and the child was put into the hands of the gentleman, to be taken to London.

The parting between Martha and James was a very bitter one. When he came to take leave of her she shut her door, and they knelt down to prayers together. She earnestly prayed that God would be with him wherever he went, and that whatever might happen to him in this world, he might hereafter be a partaker of the benefits of the death of Christ.

Soon after little James was gone, poor Martha, who was very old, was seized with an illness, of which she died. Her death was an exceedingly happy one, as she placed all her trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And now I must tell you what became of James. It was several days before he left off mourning after his grandmother and the dear cottages in which he had been brought up; but by the time he got to London, he was more cheerful. His master bought him a new suit of clothes, a hat with a silver band, very smart shoes and stockings, and some white neckcloths; putting him under the care of his other servants, that he might be taught to wait at table; his master also permitted him to receive instructions in reading and writing.

Now James lived in a large kitchen with many servants, and I am sorry to say that he heard many bad words, and learned to drink strong liquors, and to do many things which were not right. He seemed sometimes indeed very merry, and talked very fast, and you would have thought him very happy: but this was not the case, for he could not bear his own thoughts—he knew he was doing wrong. He thought much of old Martha, and he often cried bitterly when he was alone, saying, "O that I had never left my dear home! I was happy then; my God was with me. My dear grandmother taught me what was the will of God, and I delighted in striving to please him: but oh! how am I now changed!"

For some time James used to weep when he was alone: but by degrees he got more hardened in sin, and was more and more led astray by his own evil heart; for the Bible tells us that the heart of every man is desperately wicked.

As he grew older, he was employed to go behind the carriage when his master and mistress went to balls and plays; and very often he had to wait half the night

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in the street, or in some other quite as improper place, with numbers of servants, many of whom were more wicked than himself.

One night, while waiting at the door of a house where there was a great entertainment, a dreadful quarrel arose among the servants; and James, who had drunk very hard, as he said to keep himself warm, took his part in the quarrel. From one angry word they went to another, and from words they proceeded to blows, till, at length, in the heat of anger, James was thrown by another servant with his head against a stone step, where he lay for so long a time without moving, that everybody feared he was dead. His master was then sent for, who ordered him to be taken up and carried to an hospital, a place where sick people are taken care of; where he was laid upon a bed, till a doctor could be procured.

When the doctor came, he found that he was not indeed dead; and after he had been bled he recovered his senses. But his head was so much hurt by the dreadful fall that his eye-sight was quite gone; and he was, in other ways, so much injured, that he never rose again from the bed on which he had been laid, although it was some months before he died.

Every attention was shown him in the hospital which could be expected from strangers; nevertheless, poor James had not one kind friend to talk to him, nor to read to him, nor to convey comfort to his mind.

He lay from day to day on his bed with his eyes closed, and scarcely speaking to any one. For some time his thoughts were all wild and confused, and he did not attempt to pray: but after a while he began to call upon God in his grief; and his Almighty Father, who, through all this afflictive scene, had the tenderest thoughts towards him, began to open his mind to a sense of his own unworthiness. He was made to feel, by the power of the Holy Spirit, that he had been a sinner, and *that* not only in the latter part of his life, when he had fallen into gross wickedness, but even in his childhood; he saw that, even in his best days, he had done those things which he ought not to have done, and had left undone those things which he ought to have done, and that an evil heart had been ever leading him away from his God.

When the Holy Spirit of God, by his searching in-

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fluence, had made poor James sensible of his sins and of his need of a Saviour, then was comfort given to him.

One morning, as he lay in his bed thinking of his sins, his mind particularly seemed to dwell upon the ungrateful return he had made for the mercies of his early days; and while engaged on this subject, he fancied that he saw his grandmother in her little hut, sitting in her arm-chair, looking kindly upon him, and repeating to him her favourite chapters. Every thing she had said to him was brought before his memory in the freshest colours; and he particularly remembered how she had informed him, again and again, that there is no salvation for sinful man but in Christ. And that striking text, which she had taught him when he was a very little child, was brought at this time with great power to his mind—*The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.* 1 John i. 7.

"O my Saviour!" cried the poor young man, 'and may I hope that thou wilt have pity on me, that thou wilt pardon me, and that thy precious blood will indeed be effectual for *my* salvation? I come, I come to thee a miserable sinner, utterly vile and polluted; I lie at the foot of thy cross: have mercy, Lord, have mercy on me, a miserable sinner!"

Poor James now employed himself in calling to mind the chapters and verses which the pious old woman had taught him: and though he had not repeated them for several years, yet, by the power of the Holy Spirit, they were now brought with great readiness to his recollection. In this state his heart became soft and tender; so that he spent many days in grieving for his sins, and calling upon his Saviour; fervently thanking God for having provided him, in the days of his youth, with such a friend as good old Martha, who, though she had neither food nor clothing to bestow upon him, had been enabled to teach him that good Word of God, without the knowledge of which he had now assuredly perished.

At the end of five months from the time that he was brought into the hospital, poor James died. But his death was a happy one, because he had a lively faith in the death and merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, knowing himself to be a miserable sinner. And it is written, *There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.* Rom. viii. 1.

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My little children, I would have you learn from this story, that although you may not have silver and gold to give away, yet, if it is in your power to teach the Word of God to those who know it not, you may thereby perform a far better work than that of merely giving clothes to the naked and bread to the hungry!

END OF THE ORPHAN BOY.

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THE

TWO SISTERS.

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THE

TWO SISTERS.

Anne Burton and Jane Hill were sisters. Jane Hill, the younger, was a widow, but had no family. They lived together in a small house, in a little town in Herefordshire; maintaining themselves by needle-work, and occasionally going out to wash and iron, to cook or nurse. They, upon the whole, bore good characters, and were supposed to be fond of each other, as sisters ought to be; but the truth was, that the house and furniture being a joint property, left them by their father, they lived together only for convenience's sake; while there was in fact no sisterly regard between them.

The characters of these two women, although passing, as I before said, pretty well in the eye of the world, were such as would not bear a closer inspection. It was with them as with all other worldly persons; their affections were set on things on the earth, not on things above. And although their natural dispositions were different—Anne Burton, on the one hand, being of a lively temper and free carriage; while Jane, on the other hand, was grave and sour,—yet were they both equally the slaves of sin, each indulging privately her own darling propensity.

Anne Burton was given to excess in drinking, but not so as to expose herself to public shame; for she feared the world, and wished to keep up a respectable name in the town where her family had dwelt in credit for several years. She therefore never took her glass very freely till she was going to bed; and then, indeed, she treated herself, whenever she could afford it, with so large a dram, as even to prevent her crawling up stairs,

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without her sister's help. And many were the times when the curtains of her bed would have been set on fire by her carelessness, if Jane had not narrowly watched over her.

During the day she indulged herself more sparingly, seldom taking enough to produce any effect; though she never failed (unless money ran low) to take as much at her dinner as served to raise her spirits and set her talking. And then, as she was never at a loss for words, and was fond of a joke, she would run on in a manner which caused those who were at all nice and particular to avoid her society; although in general she had command enough over herself, even at such times, to suit her discourse to her company, and especially when that company consisted of her betters.

Yet with all this, Jane Hill was more disliked by her neighbours than Anne Burton, although she fell not into the gross sins of her sister: for she was temperate in her drink and diet, and offended less with her tongue. But she was exceedingly close and stingy, and had a high opinion of herself, while she despised her neighbours. She prided herself on the decency of her conduct, and looked with contempt and abhorrence on all her fellow-sinners.

She had been married, early in life, to an old man, who had one son by a former wife. To this son she had behaved so ill, that he ran away from home, and after having suffered every species of misery, had died, leaving one little boy.

This poor boy used to beg about the streets in a state of the utmost wretchedness, and often came to Jane Hill, his grandfather's widow, to beg a bit of bread. But Jane Hill never could be persuaded to do any thing for him, although she had actually in possession more than twenty guineas, which she had found among her old husband's stores after his death. But imagining the world ignorant of this circumstance, she pretended that having gained nothing by her husband, she could not be required to do any thing for his grandson.

Covetousness and pride were the besetting sins of Jane, and though these sins were more decent than those of Anne Burton, yet they proved equally effectual in separating the soul which was under their dominion from the Saviour, and in working out, we fear, its everlasting destruction.

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Such was the situation of these two sisters, the younger of whom was about forty years of age, when the minister of the parish being removed, the benefice was given to a man of extraordinary godliness, one who was enabled by his heavenly master to set forth all the doctrines of the Christian religion in such order and harmony, that no one truth was ever brought forward to the exclusion of another; but every one of them appeared in this holy man's discourses, in its due place and fairest proportion.

This excellent man soon filled his church, insomuch that every part of it was crowded every Sunday, the people running together as if they had never heard of the Christian religion before. Many who went only to stare and wonder, returned home to pray; and many were effectually converted and turned to the Lord, who is oftentimes *pleased, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe.* 1 Cor. i. 21.

Religion now became the fashion in the town and country about, while the last discourse from the pulpit for the most part furnished the subject of common conversation among the neighbours.

While persons of all descriptions were thus running to the church, Anne Burton and Jane Hill would not be left behind. They went at first, like the generality, to wonder and stare; but what they heard there had at least the effect of drawing them thither again and again. So that if the preaching of the gospel did not reach their hearts, it nevertheless informed their understandings, communicating to them a great deal of head-knowledge on the subject of religion, which every day increased, as they continued to attend their minister, and to hear the talk of their neighbours.

With respect to Jane Hill, whatever change her feelings and sentiments underwent, being a woman of few words, she, for the most part, kept all to herself. But Anne Burton very soon became not only a great talker on religious subjects, but a vehement professor: and although not one of her private habits was influenced by her religion, yet there was not a woman of the lower classes in all the town who made such a noise about the Gospel.

As I before said, she had always a great command of words; and now there was not an expression used by their excellent minister which she had not at her

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tongue's end: and painful it is to say, that the times which she chiefly chose for speaking on these subjects were those when her spirits were raised by a private dram. At such seasons she would lament the sins of her nature, and run on surprisingly upon other subjects too sacred to be mentioned in this place, or in any place whatever, or at any time, when the heart of the speaker is not duly prepared for topics of such solemnity.

Many inexperienced persons, even among the gentlefolks in the neighbourhood, were imposed upon by these high professions; while their kindness and indiscreet commendation encouraged the poor woman to carry on these pretences, till she at length deceived herself, as well as others. No one thoroughly knew her but her sister Jane, who, being well acquainted with her private habits, felt the utmost disgust whenever she heard her professions; looking upon her at the same time with a contempt which she had no care to hide. And, indeed, I believe that the loud and empty professions of Anne Burton were a dreadful hindrance to the well-doing of Jane Hill.

These sisters sometimes passed whole days together without speaking to each other, or speaking only to quarrel. Their contentions were commonly now upon religious subjects. Jane generally began by charging Anne with hypocrisy, in pretending to be religious, when she privately indulged in so odious a vice as drunkenness: while Anne in return would point out her sister's covetousness, and accuse her of cruelty to those whom she ought in justice to assist.

Jane's reply was generally of this sort, that she worked for all she got, and others might do the same; and that although she made no profession of religion, she knew that she had much more than many who did.

Anne Burton was louder, and had more to say than Jane; she therefore generally had the best of the dispute, which, for the most part, ended on Jane's side in a long fit of gloom and sullenness.

In those places where religion becomes the fashion, and where, in consequence, there is a sudden and extraordinary increase of professors, a careful minister will find it necessary to admonish all persons diligently to examine themselves, and try their own hearts; since *the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked*. Poor people especially, when their superiors in

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rank become pious, may often be led to assume an appearance of religion, in order to please their betters; by which means they not only impose upon their neighbours, and deceive their own hearts, but even bring themselves into danger of final condemnation.

It is true, that you must not wait till you have left your sins before you go to Christ: you must carry the burden of your sins, and lay it down at the feet of Him who has undertaken to bear it for you. But when you have taken your sins to the cross, you must be careful to *leave them there.*

When you have once come to Christ, and become a professor of his religion, if you have been covetous, you must be covetous no more. If you have lived in hatred, you must hate your brother no more. If you have been an adulterer, you must never more entertain an unclean thought. If you have been a drunkard, you must henceforward be sober. If the religion you profess does not enable you to lead a better life, either you have no religion at all, or it is of a wrong sort. It is true, that good works are not the *forerunners*, but they are invariably the *fruits* of faith.

Beware of false professors, *which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves: ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.* Matt. vii. 15–17.

Of all this the good minister was aware; and therefore carefully watched for the fruits of his labours, namely, the *reformation of morals among his people.* There were many who gave evidence of their faith, by turning from their sins and leading holy lives; but others who attended his ministry afforded him so little satisfaction on this head, that he determined to make his visits from house to house, for the purpose of trying what private exhortation might accomplish.

In the course of these visits he called at the house of the two sisters: it was about three o'clock in the afternoon when he came in, and he found Anne Burton alone. She was employed with her needle, and was sitting in the kitchen, which Jane, who was very neat, had just put in order. Money at that time being low, Anne had taken little, if any thing, after her dinner that day; on which account she fancied herself in a particu-

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larly good state to receive the minister. He immediately led the discourse to religious subjects, when he found that Anne understood, at least, the leading doctrines of Christianity, and could speak fluently upon them; notwithstanding which there was something in her manner that did not please the good man. If she spoke of her sins, it was like one who repeated a lesson by rote; if she spoke of the Saviour, it was with a degree of familiarity which no one could use who had an abiding sense of the immeasurable distance there is between the Almighty and Holy God and his sinful creatures: in short, she seemed to want humility, while her appearance bespoke not the state of one whose body was the temple of the Holy Spirit of God.

The good minister felt hurt, and the more so as the poor woman continued to talk freely and rapidly on religious subjects. He was silent for a time, being much troubled; after which he took occasion to point out to her that religion must begin in a very deep and humbling sense of sin, of which the general effect is to make persons silent and fearful of offending with their lips, instead of pouring out a torrent of words. He assured her, also, that assistance to do well would be given to every one who desired it: and then, saying that at some other opportunity he would call upon her again, he took his leave.

On quitting the house, the good minister turned out of the street and walked slowly up a retired path that led to the fields in which his own house was situated; meditating, as he passed, on the state of man upon earth—how, through the sinfulness of his nature, he turns every thing meant for his good into the means of his destruction; and how even religion itself, in places where it meets with respect, becomes frequently either a subject of ostentation or a cloak of disguise. It then struck him that he had not sufficiently laboured to open to his people the depravity of the heart and the utter helplessness of man's nature; but had, perhaps, led them on to cry *peace, peace, when there was no peace.* Thus the truly godly minister mourns over each particular wanderer of his flock, and takes a part of the blame of every failure.

While he was meditating in this manner, mixing his meditation with prayer, he saw a woman coming towards him from the way of the fields: and as she drew

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nearer he perceived that it was Jane Hill. He stopped her, and telling her where he had been, he expressed his anxiety for the good of her soul, in common with that of every individual of his flock. After which he informed her that he had been much surprised, in conversing with her sister, at the knowledge she displayed of the doctrines of the Christian religion; adding, that he hoped Anne Burton did not consider the mere ability of talking upon those subjects as all that was necessary to salvation, but that she endeavoured to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.

Jane was very glad of this opportunity to lay open what she called her sister's pretences, and gave such an account of Anne's private conduct as, although it did not surprise the good man, afflicted him deeply.

He answered, "I shall repeat my call very soon." And then addressing himself again to Jane, respecting her own soul, he said that he hoped her sister's example would be a warning to her. He intimated, moreover, that there were many sins not so scandalous as drunkenness, which were equally displeasing to God: that these sins, which marked the Pharisees in old time, such as *oppression of the fatherless*, *pride*, and *cruelty*, were perhaps more to be dreaded than even the sins of the flesh; because, though they less frequently brought men to shame on earth, they were not less effectual in separating the soul from God.

"There is," added this excellent man, "in your manner, when speaking of your sister, an apparent want of tenderness, which seems to make you glory in her shame. O cultivate, I beseech you, a kinder feeling towards her; and remember, with respect to yourself, that pride will as certainly shut you out from the kingdom of heaven, if not subdued, as want of sobriety will exclude her; according to our Lord's address to the proud Pharisees—*Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.*" Matt. xxi. 31.

The good minister had seen something in Jane Hill's manner which led him to adopt this tone of reproof; and he hoped that it might be of use in opening her eyes to her own state of mind, which was, in fact, not a whit better than that of her sister.

In a few days, the minister having made some further inquiries respecting the two sisters, called upon them

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again; and finding them both at home, he entered into a most serious and heart-searching conversation with them. He perceived, he said, that they were both well acquainted with the doctrines and duties of the Christian religion; that they were both, in some degree, convinced that they could be saved only by Christ the Redeemer; and that without an interest in him, nothing remained for them *but a certain fearful looking for judgment and fiery indignation.* Hebrews x. 27.

"Hitherto," said he, "you have come, and here you stand. You talk and call to others, holding forth to them what they must do to be saved; thus, by your own words, sealing your own condemnation. But you will come no further yourselves, and for this reason"—here he paused, and looked hard at them—"because each of you has a darling, a besetting sin, which holds you in bands of iron and brass; and which will hold you down beyond all possibility of relief, unless you speedily attempt to break them as by the Spirit of the Lord."

"What was it," continued the good minister, "that prevented the armies of Israel from conquering the idolaters of Ai? was it not the accursed thing which Achan had hid in the camp? Therefore, because of that accursed thing, the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned themselves to flight as an accursed people; neither would the Lord afford them his presence any more, until they put away the accursed thing from among them. *Joshua* vii. 12. In like manner, the evil habits which you cherish, the love of liquor in the elder sister, and the pride and love of money in the younger, render you utterly unable to stand before the enemies of your soul; neither can you ever expect the Lord to be with you until these accursed things are removed from among you."

The good minister then proceeded, in an affectionate and earnest manner, to exhort them to lay aside those sins by which they were so easily beset, saying, as the Lord did to Joshua on the occasion above mentioned,—"*Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?* (Joshua vii. 10.) There is help to be had," continued he; "and power will be given us to overcome the vilest lusts, if we are but willing to cast ourselves as utterly helpless and self-condemned at the foot of the cross."

He then pointed out to them various sweet passages of Scripture, in which assistance is promised to those

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who humbly seek it in the name and through the merits of the Saviour, and who are willing utterly to renounce all self-dependance. And he concluded his discourse by laying before the two sisters several awful instances which had fallen under his own knowledge, of persons making a considerable profession of religion, and giving hopes of better things, who, on finding that the gospel would not permit them the indulgence of some besetting sin, had preferred the poor and low enjoyment of that sin even to the everlasting felicity of heaven; thus perishing at last in their iniquity.

The good minister did not leave the two sisters without prayer; after which he followed up this beginning of his labours for their common good by several other private visits; in all of which he addressed them in the most serious and impressive manner; but, at length, finding his labour to be wholly without fruit, and being called elsewhere upon more promising grounds, his visits to them became less and less frequent, till they entirely ceased.

I have no pleasure in telling you the end of this story. Anne Burton could not resolve to give up her favourite liquor; nor Jane Hill to part with any of her guineas for the relief of her late husband's grandson: and these sins lying on their minds rendered religion unsavoury to them. They continued to go now and then to church; but they had no delight in its holy ordinances, for Israel's God was not with them, because they refused to put away the accursed thing.

Anne Burton's sin gained so fast upon her, after she had refused to hearken to the private exhortations of her good minister, that it speedily ruined her health; insomuch that she died before her fiftieth year, talking of religion till nearly the last, though still refusing to give up her sins. A short time before her death, she became exceedingly cast down, the delusions of Satan now having faded away, and nothing being left but horror and amazement. But her poor head was so disturbed by the drams she even then continued to take, that it was impossible for any one to afford the least spiritual assistance, although some were with her who would have led her even at that eleventh hour to the Saviour.

Jane Hill lived to a great age, and remained, to the last, hard and unsubdued. In her death there was as little hope as in that of her sister.

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The cases of these women were peculiarly awful. They knew the truth: but inasmuch as they loved their sins more than their own souls, religion became to them the savour of death unto death. Reader, forsake thy sins, and the Gospel will be to thee a savour of life unto life. 2 *Cor.* ii. 16.

END OF THE TWO SISTERS.

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JULIAN PERCIVAL.

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JULIAN PERCIVAL.

It has been asserted that there is no individual of the human race, however obscure and however little distinguished from his fellow-creatures, whose life, if represented with truth and accuracy, might not afford some important lesson to those who desire to benefit by the experience of others. Wherefore, then, it may be asked, do we meet with so many of the written lives, even of distinguished persons, which excite no interest? There are many reasons which may be given for this failure in biographical writers: it sometimes happens that the author may not have been sufficiently acquainted with his subject; or, if his hero has been a favourite, he may have preferred panegyric to truth; or, perchance, he may not have had the talent of telling his story well, and may have wanted the taste by which a judicious author knows where to enlarge and where to compress his subject; and finally, his own conceptions of things may have been mean and low, or he may not have been able to supply those ornaments of happy reflections, and graceful elucidations, which might be added, without any violations of truth, to the narrative of the most obscure of the human race.

The histories of the lives of men are therefore no mean employment for the pen of genius. Man, however fallen, however sunk, however depraved, is still a creature made for eternity. If we are prepared to express our veneration for such mouldering edifices as have endured the brunt of ages, what then ought to be our reflections in the contemplation of a ruin which must stand for ever?

It seems, then, that in order to succeed in biography, many requisites are needful, some of which I cannot pretend to command. In the first place, the subject of

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my proposed memorial is altogether inglorious as respects the world; neither has he been singularly happy nor eminently otherwise; nor can I boast of any sharpness of wit or brilliancy of fancy wherewith to adorn my narrative. But, although deficient in some of the materials wherewith to render my work a splendid production, yet I trust that I possess some advantages necessary for rendering my labours acceptable to the world in a very competent degree. I am intimately acquainted, in the first instance, with many facts relative to the subject of my memoirs; and I do not feel inclined, at present, to soar on the wings of panegyric. I have, indeed, some doubts of my perfect acquaintance with the character of my hero; but when I inform my reader that it is my own history which I am about to write, I shall undoubtedly have credit given me for feeling my subject, though it still remains to be proved whether I shall be able to succeed in making others feel with me.

But to put an end to all these reflections, and to enter upon my promised narrative. I must inform my reader that my name is Julian Percival, that I am now in my twenty-eighth year, that I am descended from a respectable family, and that I enjoy a handsome competence. I was unfortunate in losing my father in infancy, particularly so, as I have every reason to think that he was a pious man, and that he would have brought me up in a way which would have spared me many afflictions; however, I have cause to believe that all is well, as it has proved, and humbly desire to submit myself to the divine will.

Within a twelvemonth of my father's death my mother married again, and immediately afterward settled with her second husband in her jointure house. This house, in which all my early years were passed, was a large and handsome brick building; and its pleasure grounds, which were neat and extensive, had little to boast but what art might produce, with the assistance of such natural productions as may be raised by industry in every part of our green and fertile island. Immediately beyond our plantations, though happily not in a quarter from which the wind frequently set in, arose the smoke of a large manufacturing town, with its furnaces and chimneys, emulative of the Egyptian pyramids and the flames of Ætna; and beyond, in the remote

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horizon, extended a large tract of mining country, which, in a dark night, blazed with fires as numerous as the stars of the firmament.

All the events above related, viz. my father's death, my mother's second marriage, and her establishment in her house, had taken place before I was able to take note of any thing which passed; and the first which I can remember was finding myself living in this fair field of Enna, near the flaming volcanoes before mentioned, with my mother and a gentleman whom I believed to be my father. There was already one little brother in the nursery with me, with whom I was constantly associated, and who was destined to be the companion of my amusements and studies.

My nursery days probably passed much like those of other children. At length, however, I emerged from this scene of infancy, and was allowed to be more with my parents in the common sitting-room of the family, which was a large apartment, containing books, globes, mathematical instruments, specimens of natural curiosities, retorts, electrical machines, unfinished sketches, orreries, and other inexplicable matters, which but to name is sufficient to give an ignorant person a high idea of the superior wisdom of the nomenclator. I was about four years old when I was first allowed to go at pleasure into and out of this scientific chamber, where I generally found one or more persons conversing with my parents, being either inmates in the house, or occasional visiters from the neighbouring town.

The treatment I at this time received from my stepfather, who was a tall, stern, black-bearded, well-looking man, was measured more by the rules of human reason and cold philosophy than by love; and I was made to obtain many kinds of knowledge by experience, although I not unfrequently was permitted to make experiments even at the hazard, if not of my life, yet surely of my limbs.

I remember, on one of these occasions, taking one of my father's razors in my hand, and, instead of being made to lay aside the dangerous instrument, I was suffered to try experiments with it till I was severely cut, my father in the mean time coolly reasoning with me upon the nature of solid bodies, levers, wedges, and saws; while my mother, contrary to the custom of mothers in like circumstances, sat quietly by, philo-

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sophically acquiescing in this new and rational mode of instruction.

From this lesson, and others of the kind, I learned to avoid certain modes of danger, and probably after the first experiment, never played with a razor again; and when I had burnt my fingers, by putting them in a flame of a candle, I perhaps kept at a respectful distance from the flames in future. But, as I was never led to conduct myself by one permanent, unerring, and universal motive of action, such as this, "The Lord thy God requires of thee that thou shouldst obey thy parents, and all that are put in authority under them," although my understanding was enlightened in certain minor points, my general state of mind continued to be self-sufficient and arrogant, and I could never be persuaded to be the better for the experience of others.

The sort of education which I received induced me to reason and argue upon every thing I heard and saw, and to admit nothing which did not come to me by the evidence of my senses.

Our house was large and convenient, and contained all the elegances of life, and almost every refinement of luxury. Added to these, as I before hinted, were various kinds of mathematical instruments, scientific toys, and such machines for experiments as might lead to the knowledge of natural philosophy. My father drew my attention to these things in very early life; and it was really surprising how much knowledge he insinuated into my young mind on subjects of the kind before mentioned, while on those connected with religion I was left in total darkness; and though my mother once a week attended the parish church, yet, as her reasons for so doing were never hinted at, I passed from childhood to youth without once inquiring what religion was. I knew, indeed, that there was one great first cause, to whom I was to attribute such facts in natural philosophy as I could not account for; but I never thought of inquiring the nature of this great first cause till I had arrived at the age of thirteen. My father then made me acquainted with what he called natural religion, which is just so much of the nature of God, and of man's relative duties to him and to each other, as may be discovered by reason. He informed me that, by reason, man is convinced of the being and attributes of God; that he being maker of all things, man, as his creature,

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owes him the duty of a child to a parent: but, as my ideas at that time of filial duty were very imperfect, my father did not succeed in giving me very correct notions of my duty to God by comparing it to what I owed to himself.

To this outline of natural religion, which he said was the only rational religion, he added a cold, yet affectedly candid, account of all the various sects and denominations of religion existing on earth, in which he jumbled together Jews, Turks, infidels, orthodox Christians, and heretics, in a manner apparently impartial and liberal, but really so artful, that he failed not to impress my mind with a contempt of revealed religion in every form, and to induce me to reject every species of it as the influence of priestcraft acting upon the weakness of man's understanding.

While I remained in my parents' house, many circumstances combined to prevent the effects of the very evil education I had received, and the dangerous sentiments I entertained, from being very apparent. In the first place, we associated with persons in a certain rank of life, among whom good manners were indispensable; I had, therefore, from youth, been accustomed to practise these. I had also acquired habits of industry, which are certainly a great preservative against sin. My father was a very active man, and constantly had in hand some ingenious pursuit, or some entertaining experiment, in which I was his companion and fellow-labourer.

I was thus influenced, by polite company, to practise habits of petty forbearance, and was kept imperceptibly from gross vice by constant employment, till the time arrived when I was to be further tried, and it was necessary to send me to a distance from home; my deceased parent having signified a desire that I should be brought up to some liberal and learned profession. I had no turn for physic, and abhorred the thought of the church: the law, therefore, only remained, and I was accordingly sent to London at a proper age, and placed in a situation in which, had I chosen, I might have studied my profession with every advantage.

My mother, before we parted, spoke to me with considerable tenderness; the mother, as I have since recollected, breaking out, at that time, through the long habit of philosophic apathy which she had thought it right, since her union with her second husband, to assume in

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all her carriage towards me. She warned me of the dangers of the world, and the fascinations of pleasure, and entreated me to shun them for her sake; adding many philosophic arguments in favour of self-denial, &c. &c.; to all of which I listened politely, but without forming any resolutions whatever upon the subjects of her exhortations.

My reader, I doubt not, will have already anticipated what my conduct was when I arrived in town and found myself at liberty to act as I pleased; being without religion, and having money at command, without humility or self-doubt, in the centre of a gay and vicious metropolis. It is true, that all my friends had warned me of the danger of yielding to sinful pleasures; but it was not then my habit to avail myself of other people's experience; and I looked on the Almighty as a being too remotely interested in the affairs of man to take any cognizance of my actions. I had not been taught to look upon the high and mighty God through the medium of the Saviour of mankind; I was totally unacquainted with the nature and attributes of God; I had been accustomed to look with contempt on the mysteries of revelation; the doctrine of the Trinity was an offence in my eyes; and the whole system of salvation by Christ incomprehensible to me. If I had heard of man's natural depravity, I rejected the idea with abhorrence. The everlasting love of the Father, whereby, before the foundation of the world, he prepared the means of salvation for mankind, and whereby he was induced to offer his only beloved Son, his equal in power, in majesty, and eternity, as a ransom for fallen man, was a thing of which I had no conception. In God the Son I only saw a wise and prudent legislator; and I looked upon the regenerating and sanctifying operations of God the Holy Ghost as nothing more nor less than the inventions of priestcraft. I do not recollect that I ever, at that time, offered up any thing like prayer in private; and if I were sometimes drawn in with the crowd to a place of public worship, it was merely for form's sake, or curiosity, and sometimes even from worse motives. I was, in fact and deed, as complete a heathen as any of the inhabitants of those wild regions over which the southern Cross and southern Crown, with all the glories of the southern skies, have shed their splendours and told their tale, from day to day and age to age, without

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conveying one ray of spiritual light, or dispersing, in one instance, the shadows of spiritual death.

Civilized man, when not regenerated, is as forward in making a god to himself as the most barbarous heathen. The only distinction between these two orders of beings is, that the polished Socinian adorns his imaginary divinity with moral virtues, while the savage in the wilds of America clothes him with bloody and revengeful attributes: the taste of the one is better than the other, and his conceptions are superior, but they are both idolaters; for he only is a worshipper of the true God who worships him through his Son, and who knows him, as he desires to be known, through his revealed word, as unfolded to man's understanding by the influences of his Holy Spirit and the study of the inspired Scriptures.

It is not necessary to enter into the particulars of my conduct in London: it is sufficient to say that I acted as most other irreligious, self-sufficient young men would have done in my situation. I plunged into many excesses, and sowed the seeds, at that time, of those disorders which are bringing me to the tomb at an early period of my life.

On the first attack of these maladies I was compelled to submit to a close confinement, and in consequence, was obliged to endure many languid and solitary hours, forsaken by my gay companions, and unwilling, from pride, to apply to my mother, who was wholly wrapped up in her philosophic husband and second family.

During this time of confinement to a sick chamber, I was led to consider more attentively the nature of the Divinity, and was brought to acknowledge that my cold, philosophic system of religion afforded little comfort on a sick bed. When, therefore, somewhat better, and able to go out, I sought the acquaintance of a gentleman who had been the friend of my deceased father, a man who bore a high character for learning and piety.

This gentleman, who lived in London, received me kindly, and begged I would visit him whenever I found myself at leisure.

Without thoroughly opening my mind to him on the state of my feelings, from which measure I was restrained by pride, I endeavoured to draw from him his ideas of the Christian religion. I was astonished to find, in the first place, that there was strong evidence for the Christian belief, and that this religion, which I supposed

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to have existed, at the utmost, only since the time of Christ, could date its commencement from the foundations, or even before the foundations, of the world. I was made to see, from incontrovertible evidence, that it had been gradually ushered in by a series of types and shadows, of predictions and prophecies, which had extended, in a long unbroken march, from the days of Adam till the birth of Christ; each prediction becoming brighter and more clear as time advanced, till Christ himself appeared to fulfil them all, and to bring life and immortality to light.

All this knowledge of history and prophecy I acquired through the means of my learned friend He succeeded in convincing me that the Saviour was sent of God, and foreordained from the foundation of the world; that he was the Son of God, and God himself. But he failed to derive the proper deductions from these strong facts. He did not himself seem to feel that the salvation of man depended alone and entirely upon the death and merits of Christ, but left me to infer that my own good works were also necessary to my salvation, and that they must in some degree be the forerunners, not the effects, of justification.

It is difficult to give an exact and accurate definition of the mixed and compounded doctrines of my learned friend; and the more so, as probably he himself could not have stated them to his own satisfaction. Suffice it to say, that I rested for a while perfectly satisfied in these new opinions, and gave much time to the reading of the sacred volume and other religious books, being preserved by my ill health from relapsing into my former vicious habits.

In this manner I recovered my self-approbation, and cried, "Peace, peace," to my soul, when there was no peace: for the deity whom I now worshipped was not exactly the Jehovah of the Scriptures, who can only be approached in and through his beloved Son, a God who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity." Hab. i. 13. The deity whom I adored was one who, according to my imagination, could accept an imperfect obedience, making up the deficiencies of the sinner by the works and merits of the Saviour: whereas the true God, being perfectly just as well as merciful, describes himself as incapable of accepting an imperfect obedience; and therefore, not able to forgive his fallen

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creatures till they have cast away their own imperfect righteousness, and assumed the righteousness of Christ; according to that which is written in the Revelation—"What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe all tears from their eyes." Rev. vii. 13–17. But I had not as yet drunk of these living fountains of waters, and therefore I soon thirsted again.

Having for some months continued to go on in the self-righteous way before described, the time arrived when I was expected to revisit my parents. It was the winter season, and a large party of young persons were assembled in my mother's house to meet me, and to render the long evenings cheerful. These young persons, being of families connected with my stepfather, were, for the most part, self-sufficient, ignorant of religion, and well acquainted with many arguments used on the side of infidelity. In other respects, they possessed the gayety and sprightliness common to youth.

It was not long after the assembling of this party before one or two infidel sneers were uttered in my presence; upon which occasions I took fire, and being full of self-confidence, stood forth, unarmed as I was, as the champion of the cross, to the unspeakable amazement and confusion of my parents.

My arguments, though, as I have since considered, far from being bad in themselves, were dictated by pride and contempt, and of course, entirely failed of their end. Bitterness excited bitterness, and contempt contempt; and I have no doubt that I then made myself truly detested by all my young companions, and also rendered myself and my religion disagreeable to my parents; for when the time came which I had fixed for my return to London, I was not pressed to prolong my stay. I accordingly took leave, with a kind of proud feeling of having been persecuted (as I dared to think) for righ-

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teousness' sake, and returned to London, where I became, for a short time, more zealous than ever in working out my own salvation by my good deeds.

But while I was going on, as I thought, successfully in this career, in which pride and self-approbation had entire dominion of my heart, two of my young companions from the country arrived in town, full fraught with a plan of humbling me—a plan they would never have been able to accomplish had I walked in the strength of the Lord, and not in my own; for "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint." Isaiah xl. 31.

This scheme of my young companions was, first, to seek my friendship under pretence of having been partly persuaded by my arguments; and when they had won my confidence, to betray me into vice, in order that they might have an opportunity of wounding religion through a fallen professor. Their plan was artfully laid, and it succeeded; and I soon found myself again plunged into the depths of those vices which I had renounced for many months, and above which I had thought myself entirely exalted.

When again involved in the trammels of vice, I felt myself mortified and enraged, but not humbled; and, strange to say, when my wicked companions forsook me, which they soon did, to return to the country, instead of forsaking my vices and returning to the decent course of life from which I had fallen, I plunged more deeply into sin. I became, as it were, desperate, and added folly to folly; till, having drunk the cup of wicked pleasure to its deepest dregs, I had nothing before me but a lingering death.

And now, being once again reduced to a sick chamber, I was ready to blame religion as the cause of all my afflictions, and to fancy that it had not the power of contributing to my happiness in this world, or securing my salvation in the next.

In this wretched situation I remained some weeks, attended by a medical man, who expressed great pity for me, and frequently endeavoured to persuade me to leave my close chambers in town for my mother's more airy abode. But I confessed to him that I believed my

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mother despised me, and that I could not think of troubling her with my company.

"If so," said my physician, "let me persuade you to try some other situation in the country. You are young," said he, "and have wanted a sincere friend. I have much compassion for you: permit me to advise you. I have a venerable uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Berkeley, who live in an agreeable house, sweetly situated on the seaside in Devonshire. They have lately lost a dear and only son; and could I persuade them to receive you into his vacant apartments, and devote to you some of those sweet affections which now want their usual object, should you be willing to go to them, and to receive from them, as from parents, such comforts and attentions as they could bestow?"

I cannot describe what I felt when this friendly offer was made me, and how anxious I was for the answer of this worthy couple to a letter which their nephew speedily despatched to them, and which at length arrived, and was as favourable as I could wish.

I had painted Mr. and Mrs. Berkeley as plain people, living in a homely dwelling, and little acquainted with the elegances of life; and I had also fancied that the old lady would be constantly in her little kitchen, preparing me such comforts as my weak state of body required: but I expected nothing more, and, indeed, should have been contented, after the gloom of my solitary chamber, to find nothing more. What, then, was my surprise at the comforts and pleasures which awaited me at the end of my journey, which had been very much protracted by reason of my extreme weakness!

I had been several days on the road, when I arrived one evening, towards sunset, in a valley terminated by a view of the ocean, the exquisite beauty of which seemed instantly to administer a degree of calm and peace to my mind to which I had long been a stranger. The hills on each side this valley were disposed in green lawns, shaded here and there by groups of venerable oak and beech. In the very depth of the dell were a neat village and Gothic church, whose tower rose conspicuous above the thatched cottages of which the little hamlet was composed. Our way lay through this village, which having passed, we suddenly turned off into a narrow green lane, the hedges on each side being at this season fragrant with wild honeysuckle and roses;

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and continuing for some time to ascend, we suddenly arrived at one of the most lovely dwellings I ever beheld, where neatness, order, and elegance marked the habitation of the holy man. The venerable pair, dressed in deep mourning, came out at the sound of the carriage, and received me in a manner which was so exceedingly affectionate, that it was evident they had already formed a wish of bestowing upon me a large share of that affection which, since the death of their son, had perhaps in vain sought some adequate object whereon to rest. I was led by them into a parlour, where tea, fruit, white bread, and new milk were elegantly arranged; and I immediately found that the old lady had made herself acquainted with every circumstance relative to my diet, &c.

I can only give a very inaccurate account of the first hours spent in this house. I was strangely affected by a variety of sensations. I found that my venerable host and hostess possessed the most elegant manners, and that there were a peculiar refinement and pathos in all they said, which went instantly to the heart, and made me feel as if a new set of feelings had been suddenly awakened within me.

When I first entered the house, being weak and fatigued, I was suddenly affected even to tears, and as I sunk almost fainting on the first chair which was offered me, the excellent couple took each a seat by my side, and gave me such assurances of kindness and commiseration as instantly convinced me that they had already promised themselves to find in me some of those qualities which had attached them for ever to the memory of him who was now no more.

What was it that thus affected me at this moment? what ray of warmth and love had thus suddenly thawed my rigid pride? what but a sudden view of the divine goodness in bringing me to such a home, and providing me with friends like these? Never before had the beauty of religion been displayed before me as it then shone forth in the countenances of Mr. and Mrs. Berkeley; and it was at the friendly table of these venerable personages that I first heard conversation in which self was utterly abased, and the glory of every thing given to God. It was there that, for the first time, the Almighty was set before me as he has made himself known to man by his Holy Spirit and his Holy Word. Many

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and various were the thoughts which exercised my mind during our first meal; and I could not help inquiring within myself concerning the motive which could have induced this worthy couple (whom I knew to be in affluent circumstances) to burden themselves with an inmate such as I was then and still am; little supposing that it was anxiety for the welfare of a soul in danger which had urged them to this act of benevolence.

But I fear that my account of myself will transgress the boundaries of my reader's patience. Suffice it to say, that three years have elapsed since I became an inmate of Mr. Berkeley's family; during which time my state of health has varied, my disease at times seeming to lose ground, and again to recover new force. I have had repeated attacks, and as frequent revivals. My term of life is now, however, becoming evidently shorter, and I must very speedily prepare to leave this present world. The long respite which I have had since my arrival in this place, and the tardy yet certain approach of death, have been to me a blessing for which I hope to praise God through all eternity. It has been the unceasing object of Mr. and Mrs. Berkeley, from the moment I became an inmate of their house, to lead me nearer to God.

To those who understand the doctrines of our holy religion, it would be superfluous, were it in my power, to give an account of the many conversations which I have had with these excellent persons upon the subject of the Christian faith; but I cannot refrain from repeating one or two remarks which Mr. Berkeley made, when I had for the first time given him a short view of my life, and the different opinions which I had entertained on the subject of religion.

"Since," said this excellent man, "the attention of the religious world has been so much devoted to the conversion of the heathen, and that, in consequence, we have become acquainted with so many forms of false worship, I have been led to inquire whether there is not a much larger proportion of worshippers of a false god in this country than persons in general would be led to acknowledge. In a polished land, where the Christian religion is that of the state," proceeded the old gentleman, "infidelity is compelled to put on many specious forms and semblances which it may well dispense with in a less refined society; and it is marvellous what skill

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the Evil One can exercise in refining a vice and making it palatable to any age or state of man. I have been led to conclude," continued the old gentleman, "that every person who does not worship God in Christ, or who in any way departs, in his conceptions of the Deity, from what we may know of him by his word, may be counted an idolater; and he who, through the pride of intellect, refuses to admit the light of the revealed word, is in a more fearful state than the savages of the African deserts."

"Then, sir," I replied, "according to your system, we might expect to find nearly as many worshippers of a false god in the streets of London as in those of Benares or Sheraz?"

"Not so, my young friend," he answered. "I trust that there is no town in Great Britain in which there are not many of the excellent of the earth. It is among nominal Christians that we must look for true ones. The invisible church is hidden within the visible one. We are not, however, called upon to judge individuals, or to make comparisons which may imbitter the spirit: let us rather pray, my son, that, as our principles become more pure, our charity may be enlarged."

Thus this holy man was accustomed to converse with me from day to day, till insensibly I began to feel for him the affection of a son. It was some months, however, before my mind was set right on religious matters, or before I was enabled to receive the idea of the reconciliation which the Saviour has effected between the two opposite attributes of justice and mercy. When, at length, I was led to see the Father through the Son, such a beam of light and love broke in upon my mind as rendered me, as it were, a new creature. It was then, and not till then, that peace was spoken to my soul; and since that blessed period, not only has the future world opened to me in bright and glowing colours, presenting long scenes of immortal bliss and everlasting glory, but the present world has as suddenly become delightful to me. Since that period, this wilderness has literally blossomed like the rose, and every parched place has gushed forth with streams of water.

When I once understood my religion aright,—when I could once see in my God a father, brother, friend, yea, more than a friend, then it was that I began to perceive that all creation abounded with tokens of the Divine love.

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It seemed that I had never till then observed the beauty of flowers, the glory of the heavens, the charms of hill, of dale, of waterfall, of shadowy bowers, and fragrant odours. All at that time seemed new to me; all was delightful. I felt a renewal, as it were, of the springs of life. I now could understand what the poet meant by vernal delight—words which had hitherto appeared incomprehensible to me. I now understood that all happiness consisted in the knowledge of God, and in understanding the universal Father of all creatures as he would be understood, in that light in which he has represented himself in Scripture, as perfectly just and holy, and to be approached only through the Saviour: and I was then made sensible that all the boasted knowledge of God, on which the philosopher prides himself, and of which the poet boasted, is but ignorance, error, and folly, compared with that which is revealed to the veriest babes in Christ.

And now, my gentle reader, having concluded my narrative, as I shall soon, I trust, cease to feel the sins and infirmities of this present life, I must take my leave, in humble hope that some may be benefited by my example, and that all who read my story may discover that secret whereby, under sore disease and frequent anguish of body, I have enjoyed a peace of mind which I never knew in the gayest and brightest hours of unbroken youth and high prosperity.

END OF JULIAN PERCIVAL.

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EDWARD MANSFIELD.

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EDWARD MANSFIELD.

I AM now about to present to my readers a simple and unadorned history of one who moved in humble life, and was little known beyond the sphere of his own immediate connections;—of one who was neither wiser nor more distinguished, either by birth or fortune, than thousands of his countrymen, and, if worthy of remark at all, was only so inasmuch as he furnished an encouraging example of divine mercy, vouchsafed at the eleventh hour; and, short as his time was, of one who was permitted, even in that interval, to supply a very satisfactory evidence of his future blessedness.

Narratives of this kind are sometimes without interest to young persons, and to those who seek present enjoyment and delight in high excitements; but for those who love to meditate on the real state of man on earth, and to receive additional proof of the power of God in changing the heart and preparing a sinful creature for glory, every experience of the dying Christian must have its charms. We love to trace the traveller along a road which we must ourselves pass hereafter. We love to hear how his difficulties have been overcome, and to learn how he was enabled to triumph over all obstacles, and are glad to be told of the hopes which brightened his prospects at the close of his progress. There are some, indeed, as we before hinted, who are but little interested by relations of this kind, and others, on the contrary side, who do not scruple to condemn the taste of every reader who delights in works of higher excitement. But let it be remarked, that the present is a reading age, and that the appetite for literature, which is now so generally excited in every place of education, must be supplied with wholesome aliment of some kind or other, otherwise that which is unwholesome will be obtained. And whereas, in the natural world, there is an endless variety of fruits and viands prepared for the palate of man by an all-gracious Providence; so, in the

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intellectual world, the Almighty uses the various talents of different writers in such a way as may enable them to gratify the several tastes of those whom he would instruct through their means, in such a manner and to such a degree as to produce a progressive improvement in society, and to prepare the way for that most blessed time, when *the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.* Isaiah xi. 9.

It is true, indeed, that Satan sometimes engages the rarest human intellects in his own service. But this is no reason why the efforts of genius should be despised by those who wish well to the cause of religion; on the contrary, it ought to be an additional incitement to those whom it has pleased God to endow with high intellectual powers, to exert those powers in the cause of truth, and to add all lawful embellishments to those narratives by which they may hope to attract the thoughtless into the ways of holiness, and to raise the tone of taste and feeling through the general mass of reading persons. However, it may not perhaps be amiss in this place to forewarn our reader, if perchance he be a lover of complicated and marvellous adventure, that he will not find wherewith to gratify his taste in the simple annals of Edward Mansfield, which probably will have little else to recommend them but the strict adherence to truth which will be observed in the narrative.

The parents of Edward Mansfield were respectable persons, who possessed a handsome landed property in one of the wildest, most rich, and beautiful parts of our little island. It does not always happen that the most beautiful portions of the earth are the most convenient for the habitations of man; and sometimes, indeed, the very circumstances which make a country most attractive to the eye, render it less accessible to the refinements of society. What are more beautiful than the snowy summits of the mountains of Switzerland! what more delightful to the eye than their pine-clad heights, their precipices, their cataracts, their glaciers, and their rocky towers! and yet these are the scenes in which the inhabitants of one village have the least connection with another, and in which man retains his ancient customs, be they good or bad, with the most tenacity; inasmuch as, from his isolated situation, he seldomer finds himself brought into contact with his neighbour, or in a situation to receive impressions from others.

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Accordingly, among the inhabitants of those parts of England bordering on Wales, a much greater degree of wildness prevails than the citizens of our polished towns have any notion of. There are valleys among the hills, near the banks of the Teme, whose inhabitants, thirty years ago, scarcely knew the name of Christ, and were certainly wholly unacquainted with his offices; poor cottagers, who, being far from the village church, visited it only on occasion of some day of public festivity or holyday, and then, if by chance their minister was a man of fine and polished speech, probably returned to their dwellings as little acquainted with the import of his discourse as if it had been delivered in the Latin language. It is true, that there are few of these dark corners of our country into which some little light does not now begin to dawn; but as yet these imperfect and glimmering lights are still, in many cases, too weak to disperse the gloom in which these regions have been involved, as far back as the records of elder times enable us to ascertain.

It seems that it was in one of these sequestered spots that the parents of Edward Mansfield resided, and that, in consequence, they were little able to impart that spiritual knowledge to their children, of which they possessed so small a share themselves. Edward was the second of four sons, and was born in the year 1794.

Soon after his birth his parents were reduced by misfortunes, and their children were, in consequence, compelled to quit their paternal habitation, and seek their own support in different situations. Hence the four brothers were separated, never all to meet again on earth. I have frequently been led to ask, What must be the feelings of parents who are not pious, in beholding their children sporting together in thoughtless infancy, and considering that these, the friends of childhood, will probably all be parted in after-life, without the hope of ever being again united! There are, indeed, few persons now in England who have not some vague ideas of a future state; but there is a darkness, confusion, and even dread on the mind of the unbeliever on these subjects, which must ever preclude such from deriving consolation from the contemplation of them. To such there is no hope beyond the grave, and the changes and mischances of this present life must appear as almost insufferable interruptions of every kind of

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domestic happiness: whereas pious parents and dutiful and believing children, having received by faith the evidence of things not seen, though deprived of all which is dear to them in the present state, are prepared to wait with patience for the fresh budding of their domestic enjoyments, not only in the more remote abodes of celestial bliss, but in the nearer and more tangible scenes of millennial glory, and of that blessed period when the crown shall be on the head of the Saviour of mankind, and when the Good Shepherd will seek out his sheep, *and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.* Ezekiel xxxiv. 12.

Of these four brothers the eldest settled in trade, the third went abroad, while the youngest, whom we shall call James, became bailiff to a respectable farmer not very distant from his native place.

In the mean time Edward, the second son, became clerk to a banking-house in London. It appears that this young man, when a boy of twelve years old, had suffered very severely from a rheumatic complaint, and had probably at that time made some serious reflections; though his sufferings, when restored to health, left no manner of impression on his mind.

Pain and suffering are, no doubt, frequently made instruments of good; that is, when it has pleased the Almighty to bless them to the soul, by bringing down the high thoughts which are natural to man; but without these blessings they are soon forgotten, and are found rather to have a hardening than a softening effect. It is even no uncommon thing to see persons priding themselves on their afflictions, and taking some kind of credit to themselves for having been more eminent sufferers than their neighbours. It is on the mown grass that the dew from above descends with advantage; it produces no effect upon the stony and rocky land. Young people, however, in general, very speedily throw off the remembrance of past sorrows; and Edward Mansfield, when raised from the bed of sickness, thought of it no more; but, after a while, began to glory in his strength, and in the comeliness of his person, for he was more than commonly handsome.

Such was his state of mind when he went to London: nevertheless, for two years after his arrival in that scene of temptation he conducted himself with some degree

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of propriety; but after that period he returned to his former habits, and then laid the foundation of those disorders which brought him to his grave in the thirty-first year of his age.

Being out one night with a large party of young men as unprincipled as himself, he set out to return to his lodgings in a dreadful state of intoxication. He had a considerable distance to walk, and it was raining violently: he was, in consequence, wet to the skin before he arrived at home; and in this situation, being past reflection, he threw himself, drenched as he was, upon his bed; and the next morning, when awakened from his fit of intoxication, he was made aware of his folly by a dreadful shivering, which affected his whole body.

In this state he asked for brandy-and-water; and not finding the relief which he expected, called for tea, and then for more brandy. But the malady which he had contracted was beyond the reach of applications of this kind. He was, in consequence, confined for six weeks to his bed; nor did he ever after recover from the effect of this imprudence, or of the many other vices and follies of which he had been guilty.

It was about this time that he was first made sensible of the nature of those wages which sin bestows on her votaries; for *the wages of sin is death;* and the unhappy young man, now in the prime and glory of youth, began to mark the ravages which the effects of vice were making on his altered countenance. The excellency of his beauty (for he had been very handsome) was already departing, and an early decay had already set its stamp on his features. He was evidently terrified on observing these gradual approaches of dissolution; for what unassisted man can steadily look in the face of death without alarm? Being anxious to mend his ways, he was led to a close attendance on the ministry of the Rev. Alexander Fletcher, then preaching in London; and after being under the sound of the gospel for two years, obtained a sort of head knowledge, which produced an outward reformation of conduct, while his heart retaining its original pride and self-righteousness, he was still a stranger to the power of godliness. For the knowledge of Christ, as an all-sufficient Redeemer, cannot be received by the natural man. *The carnal mind is enmity against God* (Rom. viii. 7); and although nothing can be more plain and simple than the grand

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outline of the Christian religion, yet experience teaches us that it cannot be even comprehended by the unconverted creature.

The doctrine of the trinity, and the glorious mystery of the three equal and co-eternal Persons in the one God, are a stumbling-block to human reason; neither can the natural man look at the Father through the Son, nor appreciate that love by which the first Person of the Godhead was led to give his only Son for the sins of his rebellious creatures.

In Christ the Son, the unchanged soul sees only a holy man and a lawgiver; or, at most, an inferior divinity, ready to make up for the deficiencies of his creatures, and to add the linen to the woollen garment in which he is already clad. But he has no idea of free grace, and an unconditional pardon, received through the merits and deservings of another.

Of God the Spirit, the natural man, or the self-righteous professor knows nothing as it should be: though he rejects not the name from the articles of his creed, his nature and offices are utterly unknown to him; and he is ready to attribute his influences to the effect of imagination or the workings of a disordered fancy.

To such a man prayer must be a form, and religious observances little more than the pretended good works of the heathen and the papist. Nevertheless, it is often found that the traveller towards Zion is led through this legal darkness in his way to better things, and that he is frequently left for a time to try his own strength and use his own fruitless endeavours, in order that he may be brought to know, by his own experience, that every attempt to help himself must terminate only by a deeper and more certain destruction. The law has been a schoolmaster to bring many to Christ; but until we are convinced that we have transgressed the law in our own persons, not only while in our state of heedlessness, but even after many sincere attempts to live thereby, we constantly refuse to confide in that righteousness which is in the keeping of our Saviour. But to return to Edward Mansfield.

While he was thus endeavouring to make out a righteousness of his own, his mortal parts were gradually yielding to the influence of consumption, which, after a while, rendered him wholly incapable of business, and at length reduced him to such a state, that he was

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induced to quit London, hoping to find relief in purer air and more quiet scenes.

At this period, being then about thirty years of age, he arrived in the neighbourhood of his native place, where he was kindly and hospitably received in a farm-house, the inhabitants of which were distantly related to him; it being his intention to remain there a short time, and afterward to proceed to his native place.

It was an inexpressible benefit to him, that in this place he found friends who were not only willing to administer to his temporal, but also to his spiritual wants. The farmer, his wife, and son and daughter, were all Christians, not in the name only, but in spirit also, as they had made it appear by the exertions which they had used for their poor neighbours in a situation far removed from all public means.

The farmer had opened his house for a place of instruction for the poor in his vicinity, and frequently received the visits of a pious minister, who came from some little distance in order to make known the glad tidings of salvation in these dark regions, into which the sound of the Gospel had never before penetrated.

When Mrs. Chester (the farmer's wife) first beheld the emaciated and dying figure of poor Edward, she felt for him all the interest of a mother, and she became deeply solicitous not only for his temporal but eternal welfare. Indeed, the former anxieties were lost to her in the latter: for who can feel the value of the soul, and weigh any other consideration in the comparison! Dust, indeed, all, all is dust, when weighed in the balance against the concerns of the soul. Were all the temporal afflictions of the whole race of Adam to be calculated and measured according to their length, their breadth, their magnitude, and their intensity, they would in the end fail in weight and measure, when compared with the sufferings which must be endured by one single soul, existing through eternity under the influence of divine displeasure. He, then, who afflicts a province, and grinds the faces of the poor, who denies bread to the hungry and water to the thirsty, who persecutes the fatherless and oppresses the widow, is far less guilty, in point of fact, than that man who deliberately sets himself to destroy a soul: and, on the other hand, those are blessed above measure who have been used as the means of bringing only one soul to the

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knowledge of Christ. But the unconverted man is wholly dead to these considerations, and is totally unable to sympathize with the children of God in their anxieties respecting the spiritual welfare of their fellow-creatures.

As Mrs. Chester expected that Edward Mansfield would be with her only a very few days, she resolved to make the best of so short an interval for supplying his soul with that heavenly food of which he stood so greatly in need. However, it was so ordered, that his disease should gain so much ground in a few days after his arrival at the farm, that he was soon compelled to give up all thoughts of moving: and his kind friends at his present abode being very anxious not to be parted from him, he acquiesced in the idea of remaining with them, with as much pleasure as he could be supposed to feel in his present situation.

Thus an abundant opportunity for enjoying leisure and receiving instruction was kindly administered by a gracious Providence to this unhappy young man; nevertheless, for several days Mrs. Chester observed no change whatever in his manner or mode of expressing himself. He still seemed to retain a proud, unbroken spirit, and spoke of his attendance on his religious duties in London with a kind of self-satisfaction which gave pain to those who wished to see him truly humbled and divested of all self-dependance, preparatory to his thankful acceptance of mercy through the free and unmerited favour of the Redeemer.

Thus the time passed on till within three weeks of his death, at which period Mrs. Chester persuaded him to open his mind to the minister, of whom we spoke before as occasionally visiting the farm-house. What passed at that time between Edward Mansfield and the Christian minister was known only by its effects, and these were such that we cannot doubt but that this servant of God was enabled to set such views of man's utter depravity and helplessness before the dying sinner, together with such strong evidences of the nature of salvation by Christ, as utterly broke down all high thoughts of self, and made him look on his former religious performances with abhorrence. Thus his heart, which had hitherto been as the flinty rock, became soft and tender as the valleys of the water-courses. From that time he indulged no high thoughts, no rebellious

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feelings: even in the chastisements which he had endured he saw only the hand of mercy, and was full of thankfulness for the little space which had been permitted him; a space in which he hoped to be found of Him whom he had never sought, and to be united with Him whom he had never known till now.

This union with Christ, so dear to the believer, is a mystery which cannot be comprehended by the natural man; neither can he understand how the righteousness of Christ can be imputed to those who are united to him. In this doctrine he only sees a door opened to licentiousness; and though nature and Scripture are full of types of this mystery, yet he will neither behold the one nor study the other. In vain the countryman beholds the crab stock divested of its leaves and branches and converted into a living stump, in order to be fitted for the reception of the new and fruit-bearing branch which is to be grafted therein; and when, after a few winter nights and a few summer days, the ingrafted stock bursts forth with blossoms, and bends beneath the weight of golden fruit, he expresses no surprise, he acknowledges no miracle, he confesses not the hand of God, and he still remains as entirely unacquainted with the signification of the emblem as if he had not witnessed the wonderful process from its commencement to its conclusion. But to the awakened intellect of the Christian the type requires no explanation, and he is ready to exclaim, "may Christ be grafted into me, and then shall I break forth into buds and blossoms, and be as the fruitful tree whose roots are bathed in the living waters!" How glorious, how infinitely beautiful, how exalting, are the new views of the natural and spiritual world which opened on the believer, when a living principle is imparted to him from above! How then does it so often happen, that these things are concealed from multitudes who name the name of Christ, and profess him in their outward actions? It is, we fear, because many profess the name of the Redeemer while their hearts are far from him. But to return to Edward Mansfield.

From the time above spoken of, several things dropped from the dying man in the presence of Mrs. Chester, which gave her considerable pleasure. On her expressing uneasiness at seeing him so seldom occupied with a book, he replied, "I am not able now to

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read; for here," laying his hand on his chest, "I have such pain that I am incapable of attending; but I think, I think very much."

"What a mercy it is," she replied, "that you have a Saviour to think upon!"

In answer to this he said, "Never, never will I give him up."

A few days afterward, while under dreadful sufferings from difficulty of breathing, he exclaimed, "I can never live—never live."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Chester, "you will live—live for ever!"

He then, though in such dreadful agonies of body, was enabled to cry out in holy triumph, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Welcome, welcome death!" He could add no more, nor had even power to mention the name of Him who makes the believer more than conqueror.

It was the custom of the minister before spoken of to visit the farm-house every Friday, and the poor sufferer now expressed great anxiety for the coming of this day. It did come, and he heard his spiritual friend once more, but was with difficulty removed to his chamber after the departure of the minister, and never again rose from his bed.

In the neighbourhood of the farm-house in which poor Edward Mansfield had found so blessed an asylum, lives a young lady, who makes it her business, as it is her delight, to visit the sick and afflicted in her neighbourhood, and to impart instruction to the ignorant; a work especially suited for ladies in that period of life in which household and family cares press least upon them.

On the Monday after poor Edward had finally taken to his bed, this young lady visited the farm to inquire after him; and the next day, as she passed the same way, Mrs. Chester sent her son to tell her that Mr. Mansfield was dying. She immediately hastened into the house, and was conducted into the presence of the sufferer. The lines of death were already impressed on the fine countenance of the young man, for it has been already observed that he had been remarkably handsome, and it was evident to all present that his dissolution was at hand. On hearing the lady's name he looked up, and expressed himself as obliged by this

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visit of charity, but could add no more; his eyes immediately closed again, and he seemed scarcely able to draw his breath.

Mrs. Chester proposed to leave his visiter with the dying man, hoping that she might be able to administer some spiritual consolation to him; though it must be confessed that it is little, very little which man can do for his brother in these last trying moments. The hour of approaching death is that in which the soul begins to find itself shut up with God, and if at that time it has not a reconciled God to fly to, wo, wo be to it!

When left alone with the sufferer, the young lady was for some moments unable to speak; but at length, referring to that beautiful verse in the twenty-third Psalm, —*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me*, she spoke of the consolations which, at the hour of death, may be derived from those sweet and precious promises which are sprinkled through every page of Scripture. To all this he made no answer: perhaps it was not in his power to speak.

While these things were passing, James Mansfield, the brother of Edward, who, as we before said, was employed as a bailiff at some small distance, arrived at the farm, and Mrs. Chester, hoping that the sight of his brother's sufferings might prove profitable to his own soul (for this young man had but a few months since been a dreadful scoffer), introduced him to the chamber of death, and there he added to the number of those who were standing by the dying man, unable to afford the slightest alleviation of those agonies on which all looked with the deepest sympathy.

Edward Mansfield had hitherto seemed to take no notice of any thing which the young lady could say to him; but on her repeating this passage, "Jesus says, *I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live*" (John xi. 25); he suddenly cried out, "Lord, have mercy upon me! I have been a miserable sinner! a miserable sinner!"

The lady replied, "His name is the Sinner's Friend!"

On which he added, "He is merciful, merciful! I am unworthy; an unworthy creature; a great sinner!"

The young lady then turned to his brother and said, "O, Mr. Mansfield, what can money, what can friends now do for your brother! He is past all earthly, all

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human comfort, and yet, having, we trust, sought and found Him who is the sinner's friend, he would not change places with you, though enjoying the highest health and prosperity. I trust that your brother's death will be your life, and that now you will begin to devote yourself to the service of Him who alone is able to give peace in life and joy in death."

The young man appeared to be a good deal affected, and even shed tears. Those present then asked his dying brother if they should pray: he whispered that he should be happy if they would do so; adding, "I cannot join; I wish I could."

The friends of the dying man then knelt round the bed; and though their prayers were poor and imperfect, yet there can be no doubt but that they were heard, inasmuch as they were offered through that Mediator in whom alone the prayers of the believer can find acceptance. The lady then departed, and in a little more than an hour from that time Edward Mansfield expired: his last moments having been perfectly serene, and the bitterness of death being over, his soul passed away as in a deep sleep.

We rejoice to add, that there is every prospect that the death of Edward Mansfield will be blessed to his brother, who has already expressed his determination to attend on the preaching of the Gospel wherever it may be found, regardless of the ridicule of that unhappy world which cannot be impressed with the value of spiritual things.

And now, having brought our narrative to its close, we would endeavour to impress our readers with the necessity of preparing for that day when their earthly house of this tabernacle shall be shut up, so that no man can enter in; when there shall be a crying for the wine of consolation in the streets; when all joy shall be darkened, and the mirth of the land shall be gone (*Isaiah* xxiv. 10, 11); when the ear shall be closed to the sound of praise and the voice of pleasure; when even sons and daughters can bring no consolation; and when earthly honours and earthly possessions shall melt away as snow in the hand: a day to which all mankind must come, and one in which all who are not found in Christ will be equally poor and destitute.

Religion is generally accounted by the world as a melancholy thing; and it is held in abhorrence by the

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unregenerate, as replete with gloomy ideas and connected with death: and connected it is with death, but in such a way as the healing balsam is connected with the wound, and as the physician is allied with the sick. Where death is, there indeed religion ought to be, for religion alone can take out its sting, and disarm it of its power. Christ on the cross triumphed over death, and became more than its conqueror: he left to this threefold monster only the simple power of dissolving the mortal body, and, by his own resurrection, he left this assurance to the believer, that this dissolution of the corrupt body is only preparatory to its being again raised up in incorruption, and built again in glory.

They then that are in Christ have, through the medium of their spiritual head, obtained the victory; they are redeemed from the power and consequences of sin, and in temporal death they only experience a deliverance from all natural frailties, and the importunities of that evil nature which they received from their father Adam, and which they have felt to have been their torment through the long and weary days of their pilgrimage in the flesh. But before we leave these subjects and close our little volume, a few more remarks must be permitted me.

We have held out the example of one who was called at the eleventh hour; of one who obeyed the call, and is now, in consequence, in glory. Nevertheless, it should be observed, that he who wilfully puts off repentance to this last hour, may, at that time, like Esau, seek the blessing and be rejected.—"For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Heb. xii. 17. And though the case of Esau is not altogether applicable to that of the believer, insomuch as it is thought his repentance had reference only to the repair of his worldly estates, yet, when we consider that repentance is the gift of God, and that man is incapable of turning and preparing himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God, how great is the madness of those who, when called to repentance through the means of the ministers of the word, refuse to obey the call, and continue to involve themselves in the pursuit of worldly occupations, till

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the grave closes over them, and the door of hope is for ever shut!

But many object to religion because they are persuaded that there is a gloom attending it which deprives its followers of all the innocent pleasures of this life; a fatal and mistaken notion, and one which is too often conveyed to the mind of unbelievers by the defective carriage of the children of God, and by a certain harshness of manner which is found in such, and by which we are made to understand that the work of sanctification has not yet been completed in them. For the work of divine love, when wrought in the heart, produces a corresponding love to our fellow-creatures; and the affections of the believer are drawn forth towards all mankind, to the exclusion of all high considerations of self, and all unkind thoughts of others.

The regenerate and sanctified individual becomes the subject of perfect peace and ever-springing joy. All worldly cares pass from his mind; all anxious doubts and fears vanish away. He receives the ordinary comforts of life with thankfulness; in the glories of creation he reads the promises of a future and never-ending happiness; and in death, so much dreaded by the natural man, he beholds only an open door, through which he is to pass into the more immediate presence of his Redeemer.

Hence the folly of those who believe that the ways of religion are ways of sorrow, and of such as mistake the remedy for the disease. Pain, and sorrow, and fear, and death, are the wages of sin, and the portion of man on earth. But religion is the balm of Gilead, which is provided for the healing of every wound: Christ is the physician who has prepared this balm, and the Holy Spirit is he who applies it.

Yield yourselves then, my beloved readers, to those who desire to heal you. Look not to man; take not your views of religion from your fellow-creatures. but look up directly to your God. Seek him where he is to be found—in his holy book; and pray, with St. John, that the river of the water of life may be revealed to you, together with the fruit-tree bearing twelve manner of fruits, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. *Rev.* xxii. 1, 2.

END OF EDWARD MANSFIELD.

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THE INFIRMARY.

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THE

INFIRMARY.

About fifty years ago, one Mr. Pryce was minister of one of the parishes in the city of Worcester, but which I never could rightly learn.

Mr. Pryce was a very godly man: one who lived close to his Bible, and followed his master, Christ, through honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report. 2 Cor. vi. 8. He was also a very pleasant man in discourse, having a free and cheerful manner, insomuch that he made religion to appear very lovely and inviting to those with whom he conversed.

He was a man who kept little company after the ways and fashions of the world, but employed all the time he could spare from his other duties in visiting, from house to house, among his parishioners; catechising the children, admonishing the young people, praying with the aged and sick, and counselling all. Neither was he sparing in dealing out his money to the poor, but gave, as far as he was able, with a liberal hand, not grudgingly or of necessity, but cheerfully, as God would have us to do. 2 Cor. ix. 7.

Now it happened, that among the many persons whom Mr. Pryce was accustomed to visit, was an old widow of the name of Cicely Green. It had pleased God to deprive this poor woman both of husband and children, and to leave her, in her old age, with little earthly comfort, and in a very infirm state of health.

The business of gloving was at that time carried on in the city of Worcester as it is now, and Cicely worked at it; but because her eyes were beginning to fail, she could only do the coarsest kind, and in consequence her earnings were small. She however did pretty well, as she had a small house of her own, which, though but a poor place, spared her the expense of paying rent.

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Cicely was drawing towards her seventieth year, and could not read: Mr. Pryce therefore was particularly anxious about her, and gave her all the time he could spare, so that he seldom passed her door without dropping in to give her a word of exhortation or to pray with her. He used often to say, "Dame Green, you have no time to lose. You are just like a candle burning down in the socket of the candlestick: the light of your life is just going to be put out. O may it not be in eternal darkness! Cicely, there is such a place as hell: it is the place to which all sinners must go. There is but one Saviour for sinners: seek him out, hold him fast, cling to his cross, and you are safe."

I am happy to say that Mr. Pryce's words took hold of Cicely's heart. Not that I can say that either his first, his second, or his third visit seemed to do her any good; nay, he had continued to call upon her, from time to time, for the space perhaps of two years or more, before she began to take his words to heart, or rather, before the spirit began to work for her, together with the good minister. "For Paul planteth, and Apollos watereth, but God giveth the increase." 1 Cor. iii. 6. Therefore, every true Christian teacher prays that the influences of the Holy Spirit of God may accompany his teaching; knowing that, without these influences, his labour is vain. But to go on with my story.

The first sign which Cicely Green gave of her heart's being touched was, that she became sensible that she was really and truly a grievous sinner. She had, all her life, been used to say, when any one talked to her on the subject, "To be sure, I know I am a sinner, and we are all sinners," &c., but now that God had given her a real and deep conviction of sin, she found that she could not so lightly speak on these subjects; and her mind was so filled with her own vileness, that she had no leisure to talk of her neighbours' faults, as she had been used to do.

Mr. Pryce was much pleased to see the poor old woman in so humble and proper a frame, and he was careful how he administered unto her false comfort, or how he spake peace unto her before there was any peace. He led her to seek deep into her heart, to see if there were any secret or allowed sin therein. He tried and examined her by the holy commandments of God, and showed her that, by these commandments or laws, she stood condemned before God.

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This she frequently confessed, and was ready to cry out with Job, *Lord, behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.* Job xl. 4.

When Mr. Pryce believed, to the best of his judgment, that the poor sinner was in a state to receive the comfort provided in the Gospel, he opened unto her the salvation worked for sinners by Christ: and it is strange to say that she now received the Saviour as if she had never heard of him before; the reason of which was, that she now felt her need of a Saviour. She felt that, without him, she must be utterly undone and lost for ever; and now her mouth was opened to praise him, and her eyes became fountains of water pouring out tears of love for him. Her feelings, also, towards her neighbours were changed. She had been, as we all naturally are, a tattler and a busy-body; but now, the time she used to spend in idle gossiping was employed by her in prayer, and singing a few old psalms, and repeating such verses of Scripture as she could remember, while she sat at her work.

It was now nearly a year since Cicely Green had begun to think of divine things; and I am happy to say that she had continued all that time to grow in grace, and in all Christian humility, though as yet you might say she was but a babe in Christ. But at length Christmas drew near, and Mr. Pryce called upon her to say, that he hoped to see her, on the next occasion, at the Lord's table: "Where," said he, "I never as yet have had the satisfaction of seeing you."

I will now repeat to you what Cicely's answer was, and what more Mr. Pryce said to her upon the subject.

And first, Mr. Pryce, shutting the house-door, sat down by the fire and took out his pocket Bible, and, turning to the eleventh chapter of the First Corinthians, he read the following passage:

"The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."

When Mr. Pryce had read this passage, he closed the

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Bible and said, "Cicely you perceive by what I have read that our Saviour left it as his last injunction to his disciples, that they should eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of him. Here, then, is a plain duty, which all Christians ought to observe. Wherefore, then, do I not see you at the Lord's table?"

"Ah, sir!" replied Cicely, "I do not come, because I am so unworthy,—so great a sinner. I fear to eat and drink my own condemnation."

"As to your being a great sinner, and unworthy of the smallest mercy, there can be no doubt of that, Cicely. You and I, had we our deserts, should be now in hell-fire," answered Mr. Pryce. "But have you not heard that Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance? They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. There is, therefore, as our excellent catechism has it, no other preparation necessary for those who would partake of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, but 'to examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life, having a lively faith in God's mercy, through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and to be in charity with all men.' Have you forgotten your catechism, Cicely?"

"Sir," replied Cicely, "I had quite forgotten it till lately; but for a few months back I have been trying to bring the words and sense of it to my mind again, and have got one of my neighbour's children to repeat it to me, to that intent."

"That's well," said Mr. Pryce; "you are, therefore, acquainted with the words I have just repeated?"

"Yes, surely, sir," said Cicely.

"I know," continued Mr. Pryce, "that you have lately been in the habit, with God's help, of looking to your ways. You hate your sins, I trust, and wish and intend to do better?"

"I do, sir," replied the old woman.

"You know yourself to be a sinner?" continued Mr. Pryce.

"Surely, sir, I do, and a very grievous one."

"Do you wish to do better in future?"

"I do, indeed," replied Cicely; "but I know that I never shall do better, without the help of God."

"In whom do you trust for salvation?"

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"In none but Christ; none but Christ," answered the old woman, with tears in her eyes.

"I have reason to believe what you say to be true," said Mr. Pryce; "and I have no hesitation to say, that you are in a proper state to partake of the Lord's Supper: therefore I trust, Cicely, that you will not allow a sinful fear to keep you back when your Saviour invites you to come. I hope, therefore," added he, as he got up to take his leave, "that you will no longer absent yourself from the table of the Lord; and that I shall see you there on Christmas-day."

So Mr. Pryce took leave of Cicely Green; and on Christmas-day he looked for her at the Lord's table, but she was not present. After service he inquired about her of a pious neighbour, who had partaken of the holy ordinance.

"Where is your neighbour Cicely Green?" said Mr. Pryce: "is she ill? Wherefore does she not take this opportunity of partaking of the Saviour's love?"

"Oh, sir," replied Cicely's neighbour, "you must not be displeased, sir, with the poor body; for she told me herself she would gladly have come, but that she knew herself to be unworthy."

Mr. Pryce said no more at that time, thinking to call on Cicely in a few days. But before this worthy minister had an opportunity of so doing, he was taken ill with the rheumatism, and confined to his house for some months. In the mean time, Cicely herself was taken very ill; and after having suffered very severely, and not being able to pay a doctor for attendance, she was advised to get into the Infirmary. Cicely had no other friend to apply to for a ticket than Mr. Pryce. But she trusted that, if it lay in his power, he would surely supply her with one, for she had always found him a friend in need. Accordingly, with the help of her crutches, she made shift to hobble to Mr. Pryce's house, and, knocking at the door, was brought into a very neat kitchen, where Mr. Pryce was sitting by the fireside, reading his Bible.

Mr. Pryce was sorry to see Cicely looking so ill. He got up himself to set her a chair; and ordered a little mulled wine and a slice of toast to be given to her: which, when she had taken, and was refreshed, he said, "And now, Cicely, what is your business with me? What can I do for you?"

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"O! sir," said Cicely, "I came to ask a favour: could you be so kind as to serve me with a ticket for the Infirmary!"

"The Infirmary!" said Mr. Pryce, stirring the fire, and looking grave; "what can you want with a ticket for the Infirmary? I have but one to dispose of, and I must be careful to give it to a proper person."

"Sure, sir," replied Cicely, "there cannot be a more proper person than I am. I have several very sad and painful diseases about me; and a wound in my leg so large, sir, as you could almost put your hand in it. Indeed, sir, I am a poor diseased creature; and cannot pay for any help, or for any doctor's stuff."

"I am sorry to hear all this," said Mr. Pryce," his eyes still being fixed on the fire; "I should advise you to go home and try to get a little better, and then come to me, and you shall have my ticket."

"What did you say, sir? I am getting thick of hearing," answered Cicely, bending her poor shaking head towards Mr. Pryce, who gravely repeated his words.

"I would advise you, Dame Green, to go home and try to get a little better, and then come to me, and you shall have my ticket for the Infirmary."

"O! sir," said the old woman, "how can you talk so? How am I to get better, without doctor's stuff or help of any kind?"

"But surely, Mrs. Green," said Mr. Pryce, still looking grave, and raising his voice higher, "you would not have me to send such a poor creature as you are to the Infirmary—a creature filled with diseases, and covered with wounds, as you yourself confess? What an affront to the gentlemen of the Infirmary! I tell you, good woman, that I cannot think of putting such an insult upon my friends the doctors. I shall keep my ticket, I assure you, for a person in better health."

"Sir," said the old woman, looking hard at Mr. Pryce, and trying to find out what he meant by the expression of his face, "I know, sir, that you are a pleasant gentleman, and make yourself very cheerful with us poor people; but, dear sir, I am a poor creature, utterly helpless, and though I am a loathsome object, yet I am sure the gentlemen of the Infirmary, who have given their hearts and time to assisting the poor and miserable, will not take offence against you for giving your ticket to such a poor wretch as I am."

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Mr. Pryce turned to her with a look of pity: "Poor woman!" he said, "I have seemed unkind to you, but I had a reason for it, which I will now explain to you."

"When I came last Christmas, in the name of my master, Christ, who is the great doctor of sinful souls, to invite you to draw near unto him, and be washed from your sins, you refused to come, and gave this reason, that you were not worthy; although you knew that none but Christ could cleanse you from your sins.

"You now come to me for a ticket for the Infirmary, and I refuse to give it you: for if it is reasonable that you should not go to the physician of souls because of your sins, so it is equally reasonable that you should not appear before the doctors of the Infirmary, covered with diseases and sores.

"You say that the doctors will excuse the loathsome appearance of your sores, and pity you for your infirmities: but I tell you, kind and compassionate as these gentlemen are, they have not the love for you which your Saviour has.

"They, indeed, give up their time and attention for the good of the poor; but he gave his body to be broken, and his blood to be shed for us. *He bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*" Isaiah liii. 4–6.

Here Mr. Pryce stopped speaking, for poor old Cicely, being convinced of the reasonableness of his arguments, had burst into tears, and fallen down upon her knees, praying to the Almighty to forgive her sinful backwardness; crying out, "I will come to thee, my Saviour, with all my sins, for I cannot come otherwise. I will fall at the foot of thy cross, and I will seek thy righteousness, and make mention of thine only."

Mr. Pryce was pleased: tears of joy came into his eyes. He took out his pocket-book and gave Cicely the ticket for the Infirmary; telling her at the same time to fly, without loss of time, to the physician of souls.

I am happy to tell you that she was immediately received into the Infirmary, and every comfort was administered unto her till her dying day: for she died in

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the Infirmary. But before her death, Mr. Pryce had the pleasure of administering the holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ several times to her. And her good minister had the pleasure to find, that before her death she thoroughly understood how poor hell-deserving sinners are made heirs of everlasting glory by their being united with Christ, and how he that is not worthy to lick up the crumbs which fall from the master's table, when washed in the blood of the Lamb, and clad in the garment of salvation, shall be admitted to sit down in the kingdom of heaven with the angels of God.

END OF THE INFIRMARY.

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MRS. CATHARINE CRAWLEY.

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THE

HISTORY

OF

MRS. CATHERINE CRAWLEY.

In a small town in one of the southern counties of England, there is a large old mansion, which forty years ago was occupied as a boarding-house for respectable elderly gentlewomen. At the time of which I am speaking, four ladies occupied different apartments in this mansion; each having a convenient bed-room and dressing-room, although they all met to dine and spend their evenings together in the public parlour, where the mistress of the house, a lady of decayed fortune, presided at the head of her table with no small degree of self-consequence.

In this little society good manners afforded a temporary substitute for higher motives of action, for there was, unfortunately, only one individual of the small community who had any knowledge of true religion; vital religion being at that time little known in England, and few pulpits being found at that period in which the real Gospel was preached. In consequence, the religion of the established church had sunk almost entirely into a religion of forms; and notwithstanding the pure Christian simplicity and high spirituality of its liturgy and articles, its members had for the most part become darkened in their understandings, trusting to external observances, and confiding in their own merits. But among these ladies, who formed the society above mentioned, there was one individual on whose heart the light of the Gospel had begun to shine, and on whom the Holy Spirit had commenced that divine work by

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which the happiness of the individual is everlastingly secured. This person was Mrs. Catherine Crawley: she was a single lady, considerably advanced in years, and had but lately joined the society.

I have said that the ladies who resided in this house always dined and spent their evenings together; on which occasions, during every day in the week the year round, they beguiled their time with cards: in consequence of which custom they always found the Sunday evenings (on which days the card-table was interdicted) extremely heavy and irksome to them, especially as the little town in which they resided afforded but few subjects of private tittle-tattle or scandal.

As Mrs. Catherine Crawley's company was always willingly dispensed with while the rest of the family were engaged at the loo-table, so also would the ladies have been as well pleased with her absence on a Sunday evening. But this excellent person was too attentive to her duty to withdraw herself entirely from the rest of the family on the seventh day; on the contrary, she often denied herself on a Sunday evening the pleasure of communing with God in her own chamber and being still, in order that she might use what little influence she possessed in leading her companions to better subjects than would probably occupy their attention if left to themselves.

It happened one Sunday evening, in the dead of winter, after the tea-things were removed, the five old ladies being gathered close round the fire, after sundry discussions had taken place on the colour of such a person's bonnet, another person's cloak, the intended marriage of a third, and the funeral of a fourth—it so happened, I say, that the sermon which had been preached in the morning was brought under consideration. This topic was introduced by Mrs. Goodeve, the mistress of the house, who, not having been at church in the morning, thought it might not sound amiss if she made some inquiry concerning the doctor's text.

"Indeed, Mrs. Goodeve," replied Mrs. Stephens, who was the lady of largest fortune in the community, and who therefore took no small state upon herself, "I have not any thing to say against the sermon; it was well enough in its way, but altogether out of place in so genteel a congregation as ours: for you know, Mrs. Goodeve, that there are few churches in a country town

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which can boast of a more polite and select congregation than ours. For my part, I have often looked round the congregation from our pew, and scarcely seen an ungenteel person in the church."

"I remember a time when I was a girl," answered Mrs Goodeve, "when all the aisles and back seats were filled with the lower sorts of people; but since the Methodists have got footing in the town, our congregation has become vastly more select."

"Well, so far we will say," remarked Miss Betty Patterson, another lady of the community, "so far we will say, the Methodists have done good; though for my part," added she, taking a pinch of snuff, and drawing herself up into a more erect form, "I have said, and I hope I shall always keep my resolution, I have said that I would never on any account set my foot in a Methodist meeting."

"And why should you, Mrs. Betty?" said Mrs. Stephens, "since you come not under that description of persons who usually frequent those places. But we were speaking of the sermon, and I remarked that though it was in itself good, it was not adapted to the congregation:—the text was, "Thou shalt not steal;" a very suitable subject for an assize sermon, or something of that sort, but by no means proper to be brought forward in a genteel congregation."

"And why not, my dear madam?" said Mrs. Catherine Crawley, who had hitherto remained silent.

Mrs. Crawley was proceeding to remark that she believed there was no law of God with the habitual breach of which every individual might not charge himself, when several of the community together interrupted her, with a variety of such exclamations as the following:—"Upon my word, Mrs. Crawley, you have strange notions.—Indeed, we have not much reason to thank Mrs. Crawley for her good opinion of us.—What do you take us for, Mrs. Crawley? Do you suppose that you have got into a den of thieves?" And Mrs. Betty Simpson summed up the whole, by taking a pinch of snuff, humming slightly two or three times, and adding, with a short cough, "I must beg leave, I think, to return formal thanks, in the name of the present company, to Mrs. Catherine Crawley, for the high encomium she has bestowed upon us all."

Mrs. Crawley smiled, and said that she hoped if she

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had given offence, she should be forgiven: but at the same time she begged leave to remark, that what she had said was not so much levelled at the present company as at human nature in general, which she asserted to be so utterly corrupt, and so entirely perverted, as to be incapable of obeying the commands of God by its own inherent power.

On this a lady who had not hitherto spoken, whose name was Best, observed that she had more than once found occasion to remark that Mrs. Crawley professed a considerable degree of disrespect for human nature in general, "a circumstance," added she, "which has rather surprised me, and for this reason, because your actions, my dear madam, and your general manner, argue much Christian charity; and I cannot see how this benevolence, which you seem to feel and practise, can consist with so exceedingly ill an opinion of your fellow-creatures."

This remark was made with much sweetness by Mrs. Best, and with the air of one who really wished for an explanation of the enigma which she pointed out: but her remark was instantly taken up and echoed by the rest of the party with a warmth which rather startled the good lady herself, who said, "Your observation is very just, Mrs. Best, very true, very proper, and we hope Mrs. Crawley will vouchsafe a reply to it."

"With all my heart," said Mrs. Crawley; "I am ready to explain the apparent inconsistency which Mrs. Best remarks in my character; begging leave, however, first to observe, that I fear I am not worthy of the commendation with which she mentions my benevolence and charity: although I must be allowed to add, that I have known many really possessing these fine qualities in a high degree, who entertained the very lowest opinion of man in his unregenerate state."

"Well," said Mrs. Stephens, with considerable hauteur of manner, "we will not argue the point, or presume to decide at present whether these heterogeneous qualities, namely, charity and censoriousness, actually exist in your character or not: but we will beg the favour of you to account for their existence in the breasts of these excellent individuals of whom you speak; since I make no doubt that you can account for it in a satisfactory manner."

"Censoriousness, my dear madam," replied Mrs.

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Crawley, "cannot be tolerated in a Christian; we will therefore put this base quality out of the question, and return to my statement of the case, which was this; that I have known several persons remarkable for their benevolence and charity, who at the same time entertained the very lowest opinion of human nature in its unregenerate state."

"Well," said Mrs. Stephens, "we will not dispute about terms which are unimportant, but will, if you please, proceed to facts; and will trouble you, dear madam, to explain to us, how you good Christians contrive to unite what we less pious persons are in the general habit of considering as irreconcilable qualities; for instance, benevolence towards mankind, with a sovereign contempt for human nature in general."

Mrs. Catherine Crawley sighed, but her sigh was not audible, and then replied. "Permit me, ladies," she said, addressing the company in general, "to remark, that although we are taught by our religion to believe that at the fall of man his nature underwent so entire and dreadful a change, that from that time every thought of his heart has been naturally only evil continually; yet as each individual among the converted finds himself involved in the same ruin, and as he is made daily to feel and groan beneath the burden of his own inward corruptions, which corruptions he neither sees nor feels by nature, but through the power of God; such a person, I say, is far less liable to despise his fellow-creatures than the person whose mind remains in darkness on religious subjects. For example, if I have been brought, through the Spirit of God, to a knowledge of my sins, and am made sensible that I naturally am an offender against every command of God, and that, through the depravity of my nature, I am unable to refrain from the continual breach of these commandments, unless I am perpetually supplied with the divine assistance, I am led, in this case, to raise my eyes with gratitude to Him who has made me to differ from others, and to look with feelings of compassion on those who do not partake of the same benefits which I enjoy—neither do I dare to triumph over those who are still left in an unconverted state; for though I abhor their sins, I love their persons, and am drawn out in prayer and other acts of love and tenderness towards them: and thus may these two apparently irreconcilable feelings, namely, hatred of sin and love

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for the sinner, be united in the believer as they were in the Lord Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit imparted to him."

Mrs. Catherine Crawley had begun this short solution of the proposed difficulty with some degree of tremulousness and hesitation, perceiving that several of the company looked upon her with supercilious disdain; but insensibly, as she proceeded, she became so warmed by her subject as scarcely to notice this circumstance.

Having ceased to speak, no one seemed inclined to answer her excepting Mrs. Best, who put several questions to her upon the subject of the fall of man and his natural depravity; a doctrine concerning which this lady seemed to feel her curiosity considerably excited. This gave Mrs. Crawley occasion not only to speak largely on that point, but also to offer many remarks on the necessity of a Saviour, together with several of the great leading doctrines of our religion; taking care to draw all her proofs from the plainest passages of Scripture.

She then adverted to the spiritual nature of the divine commandments, pointing out how they had reference even to the thoughts and intents of the heart, forgiving and condemning even those secret purposes or desires which are never put into practice.

"I have some idea," said Mrs. Best, who had been listening from the first with great eagerness, "that you will gain your cause after all, Mrs. Crawley, and vindicate the clergyman from being out of place in his sermon this morning."

Miss Betty Patterson now took up the matter against Mrs. Best, declaring that she never would believe that a genteel congregation could be reasonably charged with the vulgar sin of stealing.

Mrs. Best and another lady, who had in the early part of the evening taken the opposite side, began to acknowledge that their minds were in a wavering state on the subject: but as the dispute became warmer than was desirable, Mrs. Crawley, with a hope of terminating the matter amicably, and conveying at the same time some useful lessons, with the divine blessing, to her companions, proposed to give them a relation of her own history, with the various temptations to dishonesty to which she had been exposed, and under which she confessed herself often to have fallen.

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The openness and simplicity with which Mrs. Crawley made this offer, pleased some and astonished others of her auditors; but all being interested, and a deep silence prevailing in the room, she proceeded thus:

MRS. CATHERINE CRAWLEY'S ACCOUNT OF HERSELF.

"There is an old adage, that 'poverty is the test of integrity.' Now poverty is so vague a term, that I will, if you please, exchange it for others better understood, and say, that the desire of having that which we do not possess is the test of integrity. And it will be found that such persons as yield to these vain desires will be led to meanness of conduct, if not to actual dishonesty. But to leave these reflections, and enter upon my narrative: I must first remark, that I believe my parentage is as much unknown to the present company as my name and person were a few months past.

"I was so unfortunate as to lose my pious parents when I was about five years of age. My father was a clergyman, who resided not many miles from the town of L——, in Staffordshire. I have a faint remembrance of the little parsonage-house in which I first drew my breath, and some few scenes of very early childhood are marked in indelible colours on my memory. I was the only surviving child of my parents, who had doubtless mourned with bitter anguish over the graves of their departed infants, little suspecting that they had more reason to weep for the living than the dead. I was too young when they died to retain any distinct remembrance of the pious instructions they had given me; though from the following circumstance I am convinced that such instructions were given—that all my ideas of religion, though apparently received in later life, seem always, in some indescribable manner, to connect themselves with the earliest scenes of my childhood. The very tent in which Abraham dwelt on the plain of Mamre is always pitched, in my imagination, in a wide field which was in view of my father's house; and Paradise, with all the blooming charms of Eden, is somehow strangely associated in my fancy with the smiling and fruitful garden of the little rectory. In addition to this—the pale, sweet face of my beloved

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mother always offers itself whenever I think of a dying saint; and even amid the darkest days of my youth, I used to think of my father with anguish whenever I had done any thing particularly amiss. But to hasten over these scenes.—I lost my parents at the age of five, and was either hurried from their death-bed scenes and never beheld their graves, or all these matters have totally passed from my remembrance: since the last recollection I have of them is that of playing before them on a grass-plot, and bringing daisies and buttercups to pour into their laps from my apron, one Sunday morning or afternoon, while the bells were ringing for divine service.

"After their departure from this world of sin and sorrow, I was removed to L——, where I was placed under the care of a distant relation, whom I was taught to call aunt, and who received for her care of me the small sum of ten pounds a-year, being the interest of two hundred pounds procured from the sale of my father's effects.

"My aunt, as I shall always call this person, lived in a small house in one of the principal streets of L——. She was a tall, thin, stiff personage, and had at one time supported herself by mantua-making, as the trade of dress-making was then called: and although she had been relieved from an entire dependance on this business by a legacy of a few hundred pounds, yet she still carried on that employment in a less extensive way, professing only to work for her particular friends and acquaintance.

"Our house included a kitchen, a small parlour, which we let to an elderly lady, and three bedrooms. As the passage to the lady's parlour was through our kitchen, in order that my aunt might not be surprised by any of her respectable acquaintance when in her undress and employed in any menial office, she had procured a screen, which passed along one corner of the kitchen from the front door to the parlour door, which she said gave the house an exceedingly genteel appearance; for to appear genteel seemed to be the utmost extent of her desires. I mention this screen particularly, notwithstanding the apparent unimportance of the circumstance; because, as I heard the matter discussed and commented upon almost every day for many years, this trifle, with certain others of equally little importance, made an impression on my mind which tended, I imagine, in no small degree, to

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form my character. My aunt was careful and anxious to use a screen: but for what purpose? To hide her real situation from the world, and to make it appear that her circumstances in life allowed her to keep others for the performance of those inferior offices which she herself was ashamed to be known to perform. I thus learned to associate in my own mind the humble duties of indigence with an idea of something disgraceful; and, as I before said, this apparently trifling circumstance had a strong and lasting influence on my conduct.

"My mode of life with my aunt was of that very common sort which appears to be hardly worth a description: but such as it was, you shall be made acquainted with it, in order to your obtaining a clear view of those peculiar circumstances which, humanly speaking, formed my character. My aunt, though not altogether good-tempered, was by no means unkind to me. She gave me such an education as she judged suitable to my state: she herself taught me to read; after which she procured for me a writing-master; furnishing me in the mean while with such instructions in needle-work as enabled me, about my twelfth year, to render myself materially serviceable to her. I also acquired under her a considerable knowledge of domestic employments, as we kept no servant, and were engaged to cook for the lady who lodged with us. I was moreover initiated into the science of card-playing (though I do not number this among my useful accomplishments); for our lodger was so exceedingly fond of this amusement, that throughout the winter, when she was for the most part confined to the house by rheumatism, I made one in a party of tredrill with her and my aunt every night. In these occupations passed the years of my early youth; during which I heard, and saw, and was assisting in many things which tended to excite my desire of making a figure in the world, with little regard to the means by which that end was to be accomplished.

"My aunt's income, even with the addition of what our lodger paid her, was extremely confined, although, as I have before hinted, she had a spirit which continually urged her to make what she called a genteel appearance. The consequence of this was, that we were always in want of money, and incessantly put upon our shifts to live; and it is wonderful to what a variety of meannesses this state of things frequently exposed us.

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As my aunt both marketed and cooked for her lodger, this circumstance afforded her opportunities without end of petty pilfering. How often have I seen her pay an extraordinary price for some article on account of our lodger, in consideration of a present made to herself by the dealer! and in what a countless number of ways did she contrive to supply our little table by her purloinings from that of our inmate! These things I long observed and said nothing; but after a while became as expert in making advantages by these pilfering practices as my aunt herself could possibly be, still becoming bolder and bolder as I proceeded with impunity in my dishonest course.

"To instance a few of our contrivances.—Whenever, on cleaning the parlour, we found the tea-chest open, we supplied ourselves with some of its contents, though always with such caution as not to risk detection. We made as free with the wine and the sugar when left in our power. We had our tithe from every loaf or other article of food which we were employed to procure. And when occupied in any piece of work for our customers, we took occasion to pilfer shreds of cloth, silk, or lace, as well as to supply ourselves with thread and tape at their expense. In all these matters, however, we conducted ourselves with so much caution as not only to escape detection, but even to avoid all suspicion.

"In the mean time I grew up a smart active girl, and being considered as rather an object of pity on account of my orphan state, some of the superior inhabitants of the street (and there were, as I before said, some very genteel families in it) began to look upon me with some little regard; and would sometimes invite me to their houses when no company was expected. I was also frequently engaged to sit with some old grandmother, or aunt, or some other sick or infirm member of a family, when the rest were engaged to a ball, or a play; and then I had often the pleasure of seeing, and the pain of envying, the young ladies who came in to take leave of their friends, in their ball-dresses, when the labours of the toilet were completed.

"On these occasions I always made myself as agreeable as I could to the persons whom I was employed to entertain; from whom, in consequence, I received many little presents.

"Among the families with whom I thus associated

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was one of more distinction than the rest. The name of this family was Cunningham. It was allied to nobility; and on this account lived in a style considerably above that of most families in the town.

"It happened that the house inhabited by this family was exactly opposite to our little dwelling, but standing back in a large court, fronted by iron gates, and forming three parts of a square, the side building of which faced the street. I had been accustomed from childhood to see the Misses Cuningham, who were about my own age, playing in the court; and had heard my aunt speak of their genteel appearance, their handsome dresses, the fine fortunes they would have, and the great accomplishments of the French governess by whom they were educated, of which last circumstance she had been made acquainted only by common report. It was no wonder, therefore, if these fine folks, whose various advantages were always displayed before me in such brilliant colours, should become the objects of my utmost admiration and envy, and that to be allowed to visit, or even speak to them, was an honour to which I presumed not to aspire.

"The family of the Cuninghams had always been a gay and fashionable family; receiving much company, and attending all places of public amusement within their reach. But when their children grew up, Mrs. Cuningham thought, no doubt, that she had an additional motive and excuse for gayety, since, as soon as her daughters were of an age to be introduced into the world, she launched out more than ever into expensive and fashionable pleasures, giving balls, and even private theatricals in her own house.

"I was a distant observer of all these delights, and have often gazed at the illuminated windows of Mrs. Cuningham's drawing-room, till, overcome with grief and mortification at the contrast which the splendid lot of the Misses Cuningham offered when compared with my situation, I have burst into tears, and broken out into exclamations of the bitterest wo.

"But although to rival the splendour of these young ladies, or enjoy their distinctions, was altogether out of my reach, yet to be admitted to their acquaintance as a kind of inferior or useful friend, I thought might perhaps be possible: and accordingly I eagerly watched for the falling out of any opportunity which might lead to this

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so much desired object. Nothing however occurred for some time, till being accidentally told, in the course of chitchat with a neighbour, that the Misses Cuningham were preparing a puppet-show, which was to be exhibited on the occasion of some birth-day, and that they were at a loss for directions to dress a puppet which was to appear in the fashion of the last century—I resolved to go over and offer my services, my aunt happening to have an old book which described the dresses of the ladies in King William's and Queen Anne's reigns.

"Having formed this bold determination, I dressed myself in the best I had, which was, I felt, exceedingly unfit for the company into which I was about to intrude, and putting on a resolution which might have been commendable in a better cause, I made my way to the front door of the house, where I pulled the bell with a trembling hand. The door being opened to me by a footman, I asked to speak with the young ladies; upon which I was ushered into a large dressing-room upstairs, in which they were assembled, with their mother and several female visiters, in elegant *dishabille*, and surrounded by such a variety of elegant toys, shreds of silks, artificial flowers, gauzes, ribands, together with dressed and undressed puppets in various fashions and costumes, that the apartment looked more like a busy toy-shop than the dressing-room of elegant and well-educated females.

"On my entering the room the young ladies looked at me for a moment, then calling me by my name as if perfectly well acquainted with me, they asked me without circumlocution what I wanted.

"Being made easy by their ease, I explained my errand without embarrassment; upon which one or two of them exclaimed, with a degree of rapture quite above the occasion, 'Well, now, this is charming—the very thing we wanted and wished for.'—'But who could possibly have told you our wants I cannot conceive,' said Miss Cuningham. 'O no matter,' replied Miss Harriet, 'it is sufficient that she has been made acquainted with them; so, Kitty Crawley, sit down immediately, and take this old lady, and make her look like a lady of the bed-chamber to Queen Mary, without loss of time, for we have an immense deal to do, and cannot get a creature to help us who has a single idea on the subject but what we put into them.'

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"I cannot describe to you the delight of my foolish heart, when I found how soon and how easily I had succeeded in my project. I thought myself now in the high-road to riches and preferment; and under this delusion I sat down among the pieces of silk, gauze, gold-lace, tissue, and artificial flowers, with a feeling of pleasure and exultation such as I had scarcely ever before experienced.

"The young ladies would not part with me to fetch the book which I spoke of as containing the pictures, but sent a footman over for it, while they all gathered round me to take my opinion about several dresses which were already in hand.

"From this time, for many days, I could talk of nothing but the Misses Cuningham, and the puppet-show, and the tasty dresses, together with the handsome pieces of silk, &c. we had to cut out from, samples of which, and those none of the smallest, I am ashamed to say, I continually brought away to show my aunt, conveying them to my own box as soon as she had satisfied her curiosity relative to them. In the mean time, till the day of the puppet-show, I was at Mrs. Cuningham's morning, noon, and night, making myself so useful and so agreeable, that nothing was to be done without consulting Kitty Crawley: in addition to which I was not only loaded with presents in order to render my appearance better, but sometimes invited to make one at the family dinner, whenever the female part of the family only were at home, and no company expected.

"At length the great day of the puppet-show arrived; and this went off so well that the young people resolved to act a play themselves, presuming upon equal success in this greater attempt. I was therefore employed to lay the puppets by in great order, and was permitted to be present at the various discussions which took place concerning this new entertainment.

"The play was at last fixed upon, and the higher characters arranged; but there was some demur in choosing a person who should act the part of a pert, forward waiting-maid—a character of no small consequence in the piece. I had some hope of being chosen to perform this part, but did not dare to offer myself. At length Miss Cuningham suggested that Kitty Crawley would be the very thing. Miss Harriet declared that there was no possible objection, excepting that I spoke

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such very broad Staffordshire. I made a courtesy, and said, 'Ladies, a little rusticity of language may perhaps be allowed in the maid, especially as the lady will be totally free from it.' Thus, by a kind of flippant forwardness, of which I had a great deal at that time, I made my way among them, mingling in their amusements and partaking of their employments, being sometimes ridiculously caressed, and at other times as much neglected.

"In the mean time, being constantly engaged in some fantastical work or other in the young ladies' dressing-room, and having webs of cloth or muslin, and whole pieces of lace and riband put before me, I took care to help myself more or less abundantly from these things, as I judged most prudent at the time, seldom returning home without purloining some little matter or other from the abundance intrusted to my care: and I not unfrequently on these occasions was accustomed to argue with myself thus:—If I should scruple to apply these things to my own use, they would only be wasted in dressing up puppets, or be devoted to some other purpose no less absurd; surely then they will be much better employed in clothing one who is actually in want. I did not consider that these things were not mine, and that in consequence I had no right to dispose of them; and although I had reason to think that their lawful owners would apply them to no profitable purpose, yet that was no concern of mine, any further than as I encouraged them in this misuse of their goods, by promoting their silly schemes. However, I made but few reflections of this kind, though I certainly was not ignorant that I did wrong in taking what did not belong to me, nor unacquainted with the penalty I incurred by so doing. I do not presume to say that it is common for persons in decent life to go the lengths that I have done in this respect; but I have reason to fear that offences of this kind are oftener committed than is generally supposed. I am not, however, by this remark, attempting to exculpate myself. No—I confess I have been a grievous sinner in this and in many other points of view; and am fully convinced that, were I to be dealt with according to my deserts, I should not have the smallest hope of future happiness.

"But to return to my story. Our dresses were made, our characters studied, our theatre prepared, and the

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important night at length arrived—a night to which I looked forward as a time of extraordinary triumph to myself in particular. My aunt was to be at the representation, and many of our neighbours and acquaintance.

"As I was not to make my appearance before the middle of the first act, I attended to help in dressing the ladies before I dressed myself, and after they were gone I assumed my own dress in the same room. As soon as I had completed my dress, and was preparing to go behind the scenes, in order to be ready when called for, I perceived that one of the ladies who was to take a character in the play had, in her hurry, left a valuable lace veil on the floor, carelessly mingled with the clothes she had pulled off. I took it up, admired its texture, folded it up, and not determined as to what I should next do with it, placed it within the folds of a newspaper which lay among some books on a hanging bookcase in the room.

"I was quite alone and unobserved, not a creature being left in any other part of the house but the theatre. My time of appearing having come, I went down and performed my part with general applause; insomuch that I met with louder plaudits than any of the other actors or actresses; in addition to which I heard several persons whisper from one to another that the lady's maid was the most natural character in the piece. There was nothing wonderful in this, as I personated a character in which I was quite at home, naturally possessing all the pertness and forwardness of manner which are ordinarily found in originals of that description. But however this might be, I was excessively elated by the praise bestowed on me, and went home that night in high glee, after putting the newspaper and its valuable contents into my pocket.

"For several days nothing was said of the veil, the family and visiters being all in a kind of delirium and confusion occasioned by a succession of balls and other amusements given in consequence of the number of young persons who were collected together in the family on account of the play: but when these amusements were at an end, and the party began to disperse, the young lady missed her veil. As it was very valuable, much inquiry was made after it, and I, among others, was employed to look for it; but as it was not in any

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part of Mr. Cuningham's house, our labour of course was altogether in vain.

"When I perceived what an uproar was made about it, and that it was considered as a thing of extraordinary consequence, I felt almost determined to bring it back; and should probably have done so, had I thought it possible to find an opportunity of disencumbering myself of it without suspicion. But while I considered of many plans how this might best be managed, a housemaid in the family was charged with stealing that and two or three other little things which had been lost; upon which she was dismissed in great haste, and certainly without proper evidence. I was not in the house when this event took place, but heard of it on my next appearance in Miss Cuningham's dressing-room, where I had now become a daily and necessary visiter. And certainly the first hearing of it gave me a considerable shock, the pain of which was revived for a long time whenever I thought of the poor girl, with whose fate I remained unacquainted for many years; for she left L—— by the coach on the very day in which she was dismissed in disgrace from her situation.

"This affair, however, alarmed my selfish feelings, and made me more careful in my little depredations. The veil, which had been the cause of the servant's dismission, never proved of the slightest service to me, since I could neither venture to wear it, nor yet to dispose of it. Thus, in this small matter, I experienced the truth of the proverb, that 'goods unjustly gotten never profit.'

"I continued in favour with the Cuningham family for some years, if such inconstant usage as I met with could reasonably be considered as a mark of favour; for if I was treated familiarly one day, I was utterly neglected the next, just as humour or circumstances suited. Nevertheless, though I spent more time in working for these persons than would have maintained me comfortably in following my aunt's business, yet I was not only under the necessity of receiving all their presents as favours, but constrained continually to acknowledge myself under the highest obligations to them.

"Not long after this, I was relieved from the tyranny which I had drawn upon myself through my foolish ambition, by my aunt's death, and the consequent necessity laid upon me of seeking another home.

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"There was, however, an elderly lady of respectable family visiting at that time in the neighbourhood, who wanted a companion; I applied for the situation, and having procured it through the recommendation of Mrs. Cuningham, I accompanied this lady to Bath and other watering-places, among which she divided her time.

"With this lady I led a dull, monotonous life for many years, though at the same time I enjoyed what had always been a great object with me, many of the elegances of high life; residing always in lodgings of a superior description, attended by well-dressed footmen, and wearing elegant clothes. The wish of being genteel was continually uppermost in my mind; and if I had a desire which could in any degree be compared with this, it was for that by which I hoped to secure to myself this delightful gentility, even after the period when I could no longer act in the capacity I then did.

"After suffering, however, such an alarm about the veil, and seeing how little I could expect to profit by actions of this kind, I think I was never afterward guilty of any thing of the kind—that is, I never actually, from that period, took any thing of value belonging to my neighbours. But I gave up my mind to another, and, perhaps, more mischievous kind of dishonesty. The lady on whom I attended had a large independent fortune, and no children: and it occurred to me, almost as soon as I entered into her family, and perceived that she was not a woman of strong sense, that it might, perhaps, be in my power to induce her to leave her fortune to me. 'If,' said I to myself, 'I can, by obliging conduct, bring this about in a natural way, no one will have a right to charge me with dishonesty, since I shall do no more than what a thousand in my place would do if they could; and though the lady's relations, in such a case, may be hurt and disappointed, yet they will have no ground for calling me to account in the matter.'

"In this manner I argued with myself, and in this manner have many others argued, not considering, that he who procures to himself the goods which belong to another, is equally guilty of a breach of the eighth commandment, whether he obtain them by force or fraud; and that in neither case he can expect the blessing of the Lord upon his possessions. For though the goods which he has thus obtained may not be taken from him, yet there is every reason to believe that the words of

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the wise man will be verified in him—'There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.' Eccles. v. 13. But at that period I made no reflections of this kind; for my mind was in a state of the most complete ignorance, both as to my duty and responsibility.

"In the mean time years rolled on, during which I not only acquired much worldly knowledge, but attained so considerable an influence over the lady with whom I resided, as gave me reason to think I should at last obtain her much desired property; and as she was considerably advanced in age, I calculated upon a speedy fulfilment of all my hopes.

"While things were in this state, I one summer accompanied my lady to Malvern wells. These are situated in the beautiful county of Worcester, where we took a ready furnished house, and remained during the greater part of the summer. In this place are many poor persons, who live by providing those humble and laborious creatures now generally called donkeys, for the use of such infirm persons as visit the wells; these creatures carry invalids up and down the hills with a certainty and steadiness of foot which render their assistance a very great convenience to such visitants as would otherwise be unable to ascend those beautiful heights. Among the number of persons who offered these creatures for our use was one woman, whose obliging manner and open and artless countenance particularly pleased the lady with whom I resided, insomuch that she would never ascend the hill unless she could have this person to accompany her: and it frequently happened that, as we took our morning excursions together, the old lady would enter into familiar conversation with her humble attendant.

"From these conversations we acquired much knowledge respecting the different places in Worcestershire, Herefordshire, and elsewhere, which were visible from the hills; and when these matters had been somewhat largely discussed, our simple guide, to our great surprise, would begin to speak on other subjects of far greater importance, by which we perceived that however mean and lowly she might appear, she was one of those blessed persons whose mind had been wonderfully enlightened upon the subject of religion.

"As she seemed to suppose that I and my lady par-

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took of the same feelings with herself, and were probably far better taught in these matters, there was no ostentation or apparent desire of display in her communications, but merely a simple wish of participating with us those religious consolations which seemed to form the happiness of her life.

"I heard her discourse at first with contempt, setting her down in my own mind as an ignorant fanatic; but the consistency of her conversation and conduct, as far as they fell under my observation, at length striking me so much as to command my respect, I listened to her somewhat more favourably, and even began to join in the commendations which my lady bestowed upon her: for, as it afterward appeared, the conversation of this humble creature had, through the divine help, sufficient influence upon her mind to induce her to seek further instruction on her return to Bath, where we spent our winter.

"But to return to myself. Though I occasionally joined my lady in commending our guide, yet it was without much feeling either of her own merit or of the importance of the subjects which so frequently supplied her with topics of discourse; and I should probably have left the place, and have totally forgotten this excellent person, had not a very remarkable circumstance, by the blessing of heaven, fixed the recollection of this poor woman and her humble piety for ever on my heart.

"It happened one day, when accompanied by this guide, as we were stopping to rest ourselves on one of the breezy heights of the hill looking down upon the beautiful vale of Worcestershire, in the depths of which the gentle Teme winds her secret course, that this woman ventured to request what she had never done before, that we would bestow a small sum upon her, for the purpose of enabling her to give assistance to a poor woman who was dying in her house.

"This person she represented as a stranger, who, travelling from Cheltenham to Worcester, had been seized with a fainting-fit at her door, and appeared to be so extremely ill that she had taken her in; and on finding that she was equally destitute of a home and of friends, had kept her for some months with herself. 'And now, ladies,' she added, 'I think that the poor creature's time is near at hand. But I have reason to rejoice greatly on her account, believing that she has

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been duly brought, through the power of divine grace, to a knowledge of her Saviour, and to a real experience of that blessed change of heart which is so necessary to salvation.' These were, as nearly as I can recollect, the sentiments which she uttered, if not exactly her words; and although they sounded to me at that time like a mere rhapsody of enthusiasm, yet I have often since remembered them with a considerable degree of pleasure; the occasion of which you will speedily comprehend.

"My lady was touched by the humanity which induced this poor woman to receive into her house a friendless stranger, and as soon as we returned home she requested me to seek her cottage, in order to convey some relief to the sick stranger. I found the house without difficulty: it was a small dwelling, homely, but clean, and covered with a thatch, which on the back sloped down nearly to the side of the hill. As I entered the outer apartment, for there were two rooms in the little dwelling, I perceived that the sick person whom I came to visit was lying on a very mean pallet in one corner of the room, covered with a coarse rug; the corner of a sheet, however, which peeped out from above the rug, looked very white, the bolster and pillow also appearing clean and decent. The good woman of the house was not at home, but a child about eight years of age was knitting by the side of a small fire.

"I was obliged to stoop as I entered the door, after which I walked up to the bed of the sick person with all the dignity of one who thinks that she has favours to bestow, and with all the ease of one who considers that these favours will cost her nothing. But as I drew near the bed, a certain something in the countenance of the poor dying creature who lay upon it excited within me a sudden emotion which I cannot describe; and it was evident, as she looked at me, that this emotion was reciprocal; for half raising her head from her pillow, and then sinking back again through weakness, she exclaimed, in a hollow tone, 'Surely—no—surely it cannot be Miss Kitty Crawley!' I could no longer doubt but that I was recognised,—but who was this poor creature that thus addressed me?

"I continued to look at her earnestly for some seconds, standing in the middle of the small apartment: but either I had never been so well acquainted with her face as

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she had been with mine, or she was so much more changed than myself, that I could not bring her to my recollection so far as to know when and where I had seen her before. She perceived my confusion, and added to it, though not intentionally, by telling me her name, and informing me that she was the person who had been sent in disgrace from Mr. Cuningham's under suspicion of having stolen a lace veil.

"For an instant I was dumb, and almost choked with horror and amazement; nor could I speak till she again addressed me, asking me if I did not recollect Margaret Hill. I answered in the affirmative, but my voice was tremulous, and I fancied that my guilt was written on my glowing cheeks. 'And you perhaps believe, Miss Kitty,' added she, 'that I stole the veil. But of that sin I was guiltless. I was no thief at that time, my character was then fair and unsullied; the Lord forgive those who unjustly deprived me of it, and thus reduced me to a state of beggary and shame, which proved the ruin of all my earthly prospects, and has brought me to this untimely and miserable end.'

"Thus speaking, the poor creature burst into an agony of bitter tears, being overpowered with the remembrance of all her sins and sufferings, which the unexpected sight of me seemed to have recalled. In a few minutes, however, she recovered herself, and wiping her eyes with a white rag which she brought from under her pillow, she looked at me with a countenance which expressed peace, notwithstanding her emaciated form and extreme paleness. 'But they meant me no harm, Miss Crawley,' she said; 'I don't think they did, only they were in too much haste. Had I not taken the matter so deeply to heart, and so sinfully rebelled against the divine will; and had I only patiently submitted for a while to shame and poverty, and not thought of escaping these troubles by entering into a shameful course of life; surely the Lord would in his good time have vindicated my innocence, and have put me into some honest and comfortable way of living! But I was impatient, Miss Kitty, exceedingly impatient and rebellious; and thus I armed my troubles against myself, and finished that ruin (I mean that temporal ruin), of which the sad business about the veil was only the beginning.'

"It is easier to conceive," continued Mrs. Crawley,

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"than to describe what I felt all this time. There was an old chair standing near me; I sunk down upon it, and had the greatest difficulty in preventing my emotions from breaking out into such vehement expressions, as I feared might excite extraordinary suspicions in the breasts of those about me. I had used myself, as a part of what I considered the character of a fine lady, to give way to hysterical feelings; and I now found it no easy matter to prevent myself from really falling into a fit of this kind, and uttering shrieks and cries which might have alarmed the neighbourhood, and given occasion for inquiries and conjectures which I should have dreaded more than any other thing that could have possibly happened to me. My agitation, though smothered, was however so apparent as to alarm the poor invalid, who, lifting herself up in her bed with a strong effort, called the little girl before mentioned, and put into her hand an old bottle of some kind of scent, which she entreated me to use; at the same time employing some words of comfort which I do not remember. While things were in this state, the good woman of the house, so often spoken of as our guide, came in, who, being made to understand that I had found an old acquaintance in the dying stranger, and attributing my emotion to the sudden workings of compassion, used every method of consolation which her unpolished, but honest and tender feelings, suggested.

"In the mean time I recovered my self-command, and taking credit to myself for all that tenderness of heart which was attributed to me, I began to busy myself about the dying person, inquiring into her wants, and promising her every relief in my power: after which I went home, and endeavoured to ease my wounded conscience by providing the dying woman with every comfort which I could procure, as well as by bestowing liberal rewards and expressions of gratitude on her poor but benevolent hostess.

"That peculiar piece of justice, however, which the injury I had done her undoubtedly required at my hand, I continued to withhold; reasoning thus with myself—'Such a confession would now do *her* no good, and it would ruin *me*.'

"After a short interval, the poor woman died in peace with God, through that Saviour who was her hope and confidence; and we removed in the autumn to Bath. I

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there made various efforts to overcome the painful feelings which the scenes I had witnessed at Malvern had excited; but in vain. My heart had there been transfixed with an arrow which still rankled within me; and though I endeavoured to give my attention, as formerly, to worldly pleasures and pursuits, I found it impossible to shake off the deep sense of guilt which pursued me continually to every place and through every employment.

"In the mean time, the lady on whom I waited seemed to be gradually led to an increased attention to the concerns of her soul; in consequence of which, she frequented places of worship with greater regularity than before.

"As it was my duty to accompany her wherever she went, I was forced to hear the discourses which were delivered on these occasions; and for a time I was inexpressibly alarmed and terrified by them, not being able, as yet, to apply to myself any of those encouraging promises with which the Gospel everywhere abounds. But, not to make my relation tedious, I will merely remark, that the distress of my mind became so violent, as to oblige me at length to sink under it; and for many months I laboured under such extreme dejection, as to incapacitate me for every duty.

"While I lay in this state (for I was confined to my bed during the greater part of the period here referred to), I was treated with the greatest kindness by my lady, and was not unfrequently visited by the minister under whose preaching my convictions had become so insupportably heavy. This gentleman, I have reason to think, treated my case in the most judicious manner, delaying to administer the comforts of the Gospel until he saw reason to believe that I had received, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, such clear and distinct views of my own natural depravity and the vileness of my past life, as he thought sufficient to induce me to embrace an offered Saviour with eagerness and gratitude. On his first visits he found me, notwithstanding my deep dejection, full of self-righteous thoughts: for though I could not but acknowledge myself an offender against God in some points (for the miserable affair of the veil was ever present to me), yet I maintained my innocence in others, and could not endure to hear it asserted, that *whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one*

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point, he is guilty of all. Neither could I for a considerable time be made to comprehend the spiritual nature of the law, nor yet to allow the truth of this humiliating statement, that an unregenerate human being is, of himself, incapable of obedience.

"The period, however, at length arrived, in which my stubborn heart was broken; and my sin and disobedience were then set in such fearful array before me, that I should utterly have sunk under a deep sense of my guilt, had it not been accompanied, in some measure, by a revelation of redeeming love.

"But as it is not at present my object to trouble you with a particular account of the dealings of the Almighty with me, but merely to notice some of the effects produced upon my heart by the operations of divine grace, I shall only add, that on recovering from my illness and returning to my usual duties, I found myself altogether a new creature, despising that which I had before loved, and desiring that which I had formerly contemned. I was particularly led at this time to abhor my former covetousness, especially the desire I had indulged of depriving my lady's relations of their undoubted rights; and the first use I made of my health was to solicit her to receive some of those persons into her house from whom I had formerly used every means in my power to alienate her.

"As she possessed a yielding spirit, which easily received every new impression, she now as readily submitted to be reconciled to her relations as she had previously been to separate herself from them: but her comfort was evidently much increased by this change of measures, though she did not seem aware through what influence it had been effected.

"It is now one of the most pleasing reflections of which I am conscious, that my lady gave evidence of a change of heart and of continued growth in grace till the time of her death. This event was sudden, happening at Bath, when left alone with me and her servants.

"As may be readily supposed, immediately upon my lady's demise, her house was filled with a crowd of relatives, and strict search made among her papers for her will; on the opening of which it was found that she had left me in possession of the whole of her large fortune.

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"I was as much surprised at this circumstance as her relations could be: for although this had been my aim through all the early part of my residence with this lady, yet I had no idea that my dishonest purposes had so far succeeded as to induce her to make a will in my favour. I was therefore, as I before said, greatly astonished, though rather less so when I observed the date of the will, which was previous to our visit to Malvern. However, upon recovering my first surprise, I was enabled to see and pursue the path of duty. After consulting with a religious friend, I disposed of the whole of the property among the relations of the departed lady, in that way which I judged most just and honourable; leaving it entirely to them to make such provision for me as my services to their deceased relative might appear to demand.

"I must here say, that all these relations treated me with the utmost gratitude, and would have forced upon me a larger sum than I was willing to accept; and I must add, that from that time to this, I have experienced from many of them a sincere and undiminished attachment.

"And now, my dear ladies," said Mrs. Crawley, "I conclude this slight sketch of my history with expressing my conviction, that the desire of appropriating the goods of another is a natural feeling, common to all unregenerate characters; and that perhaps no man exists who is altogether guiltless of this sin, although his dishonest actions may not admit of their being classed under the head of common house-breaking or vulgar stealing."

The ladies who had heard Mrs. Catherine Crawley's narrative, failed not to acknowledge their obligations to her for the amusement and instruction which they had received from it; and Mrs. Best remarked, "That she believed few persons would be inclined to make so free and frank a confession of their faults as Mrs. Catherine Crawley had done."

To this remark no one replied; but one of the ladies asked Mrs. Crawley "If, after being brought to a sense of her error respecting the veil, she had made any confession of her fault to the lady who had lost it."

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"I did, madam," said Mrs. Crawley; "I wrote to her and confessed my offence: and though I could not return the veil, which no longer existed, I insisted upon making her some pecuniary consideration, as the only recompense in my power. She behaved very handsomely on the occasion; and it afforded me no small satisfaction to find that, by my free confession, I had converted a common acquaintance into a warm and lasting friend."

Mrs. Crawley's history furnished a subject of discourse for some weeks in the boarding-house, and the pious old lady had reason to believe that she had not imposed this painful task upon herself entirely in vain; since from that time she observed the tone of self-righteousness to be considerably lowered in the society.

Whether each good lady was conscious of some secret offence against the divine law as grievous as the theft of the veil, or not, thus much is certain, that Mrs. Crawley's confession had, by the divine blessing, so far induced each one to look inward, that from that time nothing was heard among them of "those kind of sins of which the *common people only are guilty*."

END OF MRS. CRAWLEY.

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JOAN; OR, TRUSTWORTHY.

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JOAN: OR, TRUSTWORTHY.

PART I.

In a certain county of England, the name of which is of little importance, there lived a noble earl, whom I shall call Lord Oakwood, as I do not choose to give his real title.

Lord Oakwood was a middle aged man at the time of which I am speaking, and lived at his own mansion-house, with his lady, his three children, and his aunt, Lady Anne, who was a widow.

Lord Oakwood's was a high and proud family, and kept up great state in the old mansion-house, which was called in the neighbourhood "The Hall." Nevertheless, they were moral people, and kind to the poor, and wished to have every thing about them managed in a decent, orderly way. But, like most great families, they had many bad servants about them, although Mrs. Timmins, the housekeeper, who had been my lord's nurse, was a truly honest woman, and had the good of the family as much at heart as if she had been the mother instead of the nurse of her lord.

I could say a great deal of the grandeur of Oakwood Hall, for it was the wonder of all the country-people round. It was a large square house, having three grand fronts, each being set off with a flight of steps and iron rails leading to great double doors, with three rows of windows up to the eaves, besides a number of windows in the roof, which was of dark slate. And in each corner of the building was a round tower, with a pepper-box top, and a gilt weathercock, which shone in a sunny day, and looked very handsome indeed. The kitchen and servants'-offices and yards occupied the fourth side

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of the house; but these being all enclosed with walls, and the walls hid by trees, there was nothing unsightly in this part of the mansion.

Such was Oakwood Hall. And when I tell you that on one side of it, at a small distance, there was a great lake surrounded by trees;—on another a handsome garden, with small groves, and little beds of flowers placed directly opposite each other in the most regular order, with straight stone terraces, appearing like great steps one under another;—and that on the third side there was a long avenue which reached to the very end of the park, and was terminated by a porter's lodge;—you will have some idea of the magnificence of this place, and not wonder that it was so much admired by people about, that a person who had not seen Oakwood Hall was said, in those parts, to have seen nothing.

I have said that the avenue ran quite through the park. This park was a very large and fine one, and abounded with deer, sheep, and black cattle of a particular sort. Here, also, a few of my lord's horses were allowed to wear out their old age without work; for he was very kind to his four-footed servants. Towards the north there was a round hill, which seemed to have been formed by art, being as regular as if it had been moulded by the hand. On the top of this hill was a clump of fir-trees, which might be seen far and near, and was called by the country-people "Sky's Top." Behind this clump, and outside the paling of the park, was a large farm, rented by a man of the name of Horton, whose family, having been tenants of the Earls of Oakwood for many years, was supposed to be as substantial as any in the neighbourhood. From "Horton's Farm," as it was called, there was a lane which ran towards the east into the great north road, and on the west penetrated a country frequented only by persons employed in agricultural business, and was therefore seldom passed by wheel-carriages, except in harvest time. On the side of this lane, in a kind of a dingle, or bottom, was a little thatched cottage, in which lived a labouring man, employed by Farmer Horton, named Clark, with his wife Kitty and his little daughter Joan.

John Clark was a quiet man, and being of very few words, his character was little understood, though the farmer had much confidence in him, and whenever any thing was to be done which required a steady hand,

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John was always the first to be called for. Kitty was a plain woman in her person, and had not much more to say for herself than her husband: but, notwithstanding her ill-shaped face and clumsy gait, there was a freshness and cleanliness about her, together with a look of harmlessness, which overcame all that would otherwise have been unpleasant in her appearance.

These good people had been married many years, and never had had, in a regular way, more than six shillings a week to live upon; for what Kitty might get in harvest-time, and by setting beans, or weeding, or washing at the farm, was always set aside for buying clothes and other chance expenses.

For some time after their marriage, John and Kitty had no children. They were therefore quite delighted when little Joan made her appearance; and when John came one morning to announce the good news to Mrs. Horton, his rough face was perfectly distorted with joy.

Little Joan, when born, was the very counterpart of her mother; and the likeness seemed, if possible, to increase every day: only, to do Joan justice, she had a clearer red and white, and her eyes were not so small, and of a brighter blue than those of Kitty.

The poor mother, however, had no notion of dressing the little girl like a child; but had prepared for her, even before her birth, a set of clothes exactly like her own, excepting that they were much smaller. There never was a better nurse than Kitty, and never one who made so little bustle about her nursery. While Joan was a baby, the good mother entirely gave up her out-doors' work; but took to it again as soon as the child was able to follow her: and then it would have amused you to see the pair, each with her short blue petticoat and jacket, and her mob cap tied under the chin, the little one trotting after the mother, and looking like another old woman of a smaller species.

As soon as Joan could speak, she was made to say her prayers morning and evening; and she could tell who was the first man, and answer all the questions of that kind in the old Reading made Easy, before she was five years old.

Kitty and John had spent their Sabbath evenings in reading their Bibles, from the time they had been married; and had thus improved themselves so much that

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now without difficulty they taught their child to read. And by making the best of all opportunities on the Lord's-day, and in rainy weather, when Kitty could not work out of doors, before Joan was seven years old, they had taught her to read, in a homely way indeed, but with great readiness. They had also enforced the duty of obedience on the child, using her to do whatever she was ordered, without a word, and as in the presence of God.

And now, perhaps, my reader will say, Were Kitty and John pious people? I answer, They were people of few words, but faithful in all their duties. And, in my turn, I will ask a question—Are people who do not fear God ever faithful and trustworthy in all things? No: such persons are never uniformly faithful in the unrighteous mammon. They are never to be trusted when their own interests seem to interfere with those of their neighbours, but are continually prone to yield to temptation, having no divine principle to preserve them. We may, therefore, conclude, that this poor honest couple were pious; and our next question is, How did they obtain a knowledge of religion?

They had not, it is true, many means of learning, for there was service only once a week in the parish-church of Oakwood; but Kitty had had a pious mother; she also had a Bible and Prayer-book, and she remembered what her mother had told her about the wickedness of man's nature, the need of a change of heart, and the impossibility of being saved without Christ; she had, also, encouraged her husband to read his Bible, and made his home comfortable to him; and thus, by the divine blessing, these poor people had grown in grace with little human help, and were become of the number of those who, though the world takes no account of them, shall shine in the crown of the Redeemer in that day when he shall make up his jewels. Under these parents, little Joan grew up in such a state of mind as the proudest person might envy. She was humble, and perfectly upright, never using any deceit, and, by the divine blessing, had this idea constantly before her, that God saw all she did. Her mother had early taught her to try to be contented with things as they were in this world, and to look for happiness in the world to come. And it is wonderful what effect this sentiment, con-

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stantly expressed before children, works upon their minds, quenching all proud, envious, and ambitious feelings, and making them cheerful and upright.

And now, if it were not out of place, I might say a great deal on the mischief which is done to the minds of young people by the chance conversation of their parents and friends. When a child hears them talk of beauty, riches, and honours, as things to be desired, neither sermons, lectures, catechisms, nor reproofs (given in a set way), will be of any profit. If grown persons are inconsistent, children immediately find it out; and it is very certain that young people are more hurt by inconsistent professors than by the most worldly of their acquaintance.

I will, however, say no more on this subject now, but go on with my story. Joan lived under the eye of her worthy parents, giving them all the comfort in her power, till she was about seventeen years old, when the events which I am about to relate took place.

It was on a fine afternoon in the early part of autumn, as Mrs. Horton was scolding her maids at the kitchen-door, that she espied a very dignified personage making her way through the farm-yard as a short cut to the house. This was no other than Mrs. Timmins, or, as she was commonly called, the housekeeper, by way of distinction. She was dressed in the fashion of about forty years past; and behind her walked the scullion from the hall, carrying an umbrella and cloak. Mrs. Horton and Mrs. Timmins were on the kindest terms imaginable; for it was through Mrs. Timmins that the farmer's wife got the best authenticated and freshest news from the mansion.

"And so, Mrs. Horton," exclaimed Mrs. Timmins, as she ascended the steps from the yard into the kitchen, "I am come at last; the family is gone out to dinner, and I have made my escape. Come, come, don't put yourself in a bustle; I shall go into your little parlour; I will have no fire lighted in the best room. You must take me as I come, and I shall take you as you are." And so saying, the good lady swam across the kitchen into that small apartment which is generally to be found in the corner of a farmer's kitchen, commonly known by the name of The Little Parlour. There the two good ladies sat down, and entered into a discussion on many matters, which terminated by Mrs. Timmins say-

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ing, "I am in great distress for a trusty girl; but I fear it is in vain to ask you to recommend me one; for servants, Mrs. Horton, servants now-a-days—"

"Ah," said the other, "servants are indeed come to a fine pass. But do you want a skilful servant?"

"No," replied Mrs. Timmins, "I only want one to carry my keys when I am ill with my rheumatism, and to wait on me. Why, do you know, Mrs. Horton, that when I am confined with my lameness, I have not a creature, high or low, to whom I can say, 'Go into the store-room, and fetch such and such things,' without being sure of something being purloined. Only conceive, when I was ill of the pain in the back, we used as much tea in one week as would have served us for a month. And what else went, I can no more tell than the child unborn."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Horton, lifting up her hands. "But I don't know why I should make such a wonderment of it. And now, I am thinking, there is a little girl, Joan Clark, in our neighbourhood, the same you see at church in the felt hat, just behind our seat, who comes of as honest parents as any in the three kingdoms; but she is a poor ordinary thing, and I don't know whether you will be able to bear the sight of her."

"I shall be able to bear the sight of any thing that is honest," returned the other.

"But won't the other servants spoil her?" replied Mrs. Horton.

"It must be my business to see to that," answered the housekeeper; "at any rate, I will try her till Christmas. So do have the goodness to send her down with her mother to-morrow morning."

This matter being settled, the two ladies began to talk of other things; and that very evening, Mrs. Horton sent word to Kitty to come to her the next day, in her best clothes, and to bring her daughter with her.

Mrs. Timmins had just finished her breakfast in the housekeeper's room, when Betty Harford, the housemaid, came in, and informed her that two poor women were waiting at the door to speak to her.

"Bid them walk in," said Mrs. Timmins: and a moment afterward in came Kitty and Joan, dressed in blue linsey gowns, with mob caps and check aprons, courtesying every step, not at the same time, but one after the other; so that they were in perpetual motion. After

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them came Betty, and was busying herself at one end of the apartment: on which, Mrs. Timmins sent her to scour a room at the farthest end of the house, bolting the door after her. "And so," she said, addressing Kitty, "I hear that you want a place for your daughter?"

"Yes, madam," replied the good woman, courtesying, her courtesy being immediately followed up by another of Joan's.

"Perhaps," said the housekeeper, "I might hear of a place for her. What is she capable of?"

"*Capable!* my lady," repeated Kitty, again courtesying.

"What can she do?" said the housekeeper.

"Very little, my lady," returned Kitty; "nothing to speak of: she knows very little."

"What! have you brought her up in idleness?" asked Mrs. Timmins.

"No, my lady," replied the mother; "but I have had nothing but common work for her to do."

"Is she honest? does she speak the truth?" said Mrs. Timmins.

"I hope so, my lady," replied Kitty, colouring, while the tears came into her eyes; "I hope so;" and she looked kindly at Joan; "I hope so, my lady."

"Well, then," said Mrs. Timmins, "I will try her. She shall come to me, and wait on me, and help to mend the linen: and if I find her a good girl, I will be good to her; but she must never speak an untruth to me. Mind this, young woman," added the housekeeper; "whatever wrong thing you do, you must tell me, and hide nothing."

"Just as you have been used to do to me, Joan," added Kitty. "Tell every thing, my dear child; hide nothing; remember that God sees all you do. And, madam," she added, turning to the housekeeper, "if you will but please to keep her in your sight, if it's in ever such a corner, it will be such a kindness. For she is young, and has never been from home; and if she sees bad examples, she may be spoiled. And I shan't care what she does, or what wages she has; so as she may be kept out of harm's way."

Mrs. Timmins was by no means offended at this request; and she took out a guinea and a half from her purse, and bade Kitty prepare her daughter's clothes, and send her as soon as they were made.

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Kitty and Joan were then sent off, and Betty came in again to try to find out the occasion of their coming; but Mrs. Timmins did not satisfy her.

It was that day week precisely when John Clark arrived at the hall, carrying an old carved oaken box, the only one possessed by the poor couple, containing his daughter's clothes; while Joan trudged after him, dressed in one of her new gowns, which was a dark blue print, with a decent apron, cap, and kerchief.

The appearance of John and his daughter excited no small stir among the servants at the hall. As they passed by the stable, the grooms and helpers stood still to look at them, and winked at each other in contempt of their homely figures. Betty and Charlotte (the two housemaids) stretched their necks out of an up-stairs window; and the footmen laughed outright when John inquired of them, at the door of the servants' hall, for the housekeeper.

"Why, what do you want with her?" was the only reply which the good man received: on which Joan went forward to the door of the housekeeper's room, and knocked gently.

"O, it's you, Joan!" said Mrs. Timmins, who was presiding over some sweetmeats; "walk in."

Joan was encouraged by the kind manner of Mrs. Timmins; and telling her that her father was waiting, the housekeeper bade him come in. "Well, my good man," said the housekeeper, "so you have brought your daughter; and I hope she will prove a trusty girl."

"I hope so, honoured madam," said John, stroking down his hair; and he looked kindly at Joan. "And you'll be pleased to let her wait on you, madam; and I hope she will look up to you in all dutifulness. And you won't make acquaintance, Joan; but mind what madam says."

Joan courtesied, but could not speak.

"Don't fear, good man," said the housekeeper: "I will keep the girl with me, and she shall come to see you one Sunday every month. And now set down that box in a corner." And so saying, she put a shilling into his hand from some money which her lady had given her for the poor, and a bundle of coarse garments for his wife; and ordering him some bread and cheese and beer, dismissed him.

The poor man could not speak to express his grati-

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tude; but as he went out, Mrs. Timmins heard him say to Joan, "Remember, God sees you, child;" but, from his manner of giving this advice, it was evidently not intended for any one's ears but Joan's.

As soon as he was gone, Mrs. Timmins bade Joan take up the box and follow her.

The good housekeeper then went before, and took Joan up two immense flights of back stairs to the attics, where a very long and wide gallery led to a number of apartments. In the centre of this gallery she stopped before a door, which she told Joan to observe, as it was the housekeeper's own apartment, which was to be cleaned and put to rights by her: after which, she directed her to open a door immediately on the other side of the gallery, where was a little room or closet with a skylight in the roof. Here was a small bedstead, neat and comfortable, with check curtains; a deal table, with a looking-glass and candlestick; a ewer and basin for washing; a single rush-bottom chair; and sundry brooms and brushes, suspended neatly from the wall. "There," said she, "is a great indulgence—a room to yourself. Put down your trunk in that corner, and let me never see this room in a flutter. I desire, also, that you will always keep your door locked, and let the key hang to your side."

Joan courtesied and courtesied; but not a word did she venture to say, but "Yes, madam," and "Yes, sure, madam."

Mrs. Timmins then told her to put off her cloak and bonnet, and then come down to her; after which the good lady returned to the housekeeper's room.

Joan had scarcely put off her bonnet and placed it in her box, when she heard a large bell ring; and thinking this bell might be for her, she hastened down, having locked her door.

In the gallery she met the two housemaids; and Betty accosted her as an old acquaintance. "So, you are come to live among us, Joan Clark," she said. "Madam has been very close about it, however. You came to be hired that day, didn't you? Well, come along; the servants' dinner is ready. You'll be to dine with us, I reckon?"

"I don't know," replied Joan; "the mistress did not say."

"Why, you don't think, sure," returned Betty, "to

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dine at the second table? I am sure Miss Jenny and Mrs. Bibs won't agree to that: so come along."

While this passed, they were all descending the stairs; and, as Joan did not speak, Mrs. Betty repeated her question—"Sure you have not been told that you are to dine with the steward, and the butler, and the ladies' maids! Can't you speak? Sure the girl is not tongue-tied!"

"No," returned Joan, "I can speak: but I don't know what you are talking about."

"O, you'll know by-and-by," replied Betty, laughing, and looking at Charlotte, whom she pinched at the same time on the arm; "We'll teach you all about it by-and-by, won't we, Charlotte?"

At this moment Mrs. Timmins appearing at the bottom of the stairs, and calling Joan, Mrs. Betty's volubility was checked, and Joan hastened to her mistress.

As soon as Mrs. Timmins found herself alone with Joan, she asked her what those young women had been saying to her.

As Joan had hitherto never spoken four connected words, Mrs. Timmins was not a little surprised, when, in reply, she gave her a straight-forward, correct, and very intelligent answer; not abridging or enlarging a single point.

Mrs. Timmins coloured while Joan told her story, and then replied, "Joan Clark, mind what I say. You are come into this house not to make acquaintance with the servants, but to help me. You are ignorant and unskilful, I know; but I am told you are strictly honest. If you continue so, poor and humble as you are, you may be a great help to me, and will gain the good-will of my lord and lady: but if you make acquaintance with the other servants, and follow their ways, you will be good for nothing, and, instead of enjoying my good-will, you will make an enemy of me."

"Ben't I to talk to them young women then, madam?" said Joan, courtesying.

"No," replied Mrs. Timmins, "neither to them nor to any other in the house, more than just answering a civil question or so. And now, as you know my mind, you will please to remember it."

Joan courtesied, and no more was said, Mrs. Timmins having directed her to help her in what she was doing.

Within the housekeeper's room were many cupboards

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and presses for linen; also, a very large store-room, surrounded with shelves, and in the centre of this store-room a large table, on which were weights and scales. These cupboards and store-room were always kept locked when the housekeeper was not there, and the keys which belonged to these locks might be generally seen suspended by a steel chain to Mrs. Timmins's apron-string; a circumstance which added not a little to the respect paid her by all the servants, and still more so to the estimation in which she was held by all the poor people in the neighbourhood. Mrs. Timmins told Joan to take notice of the different places in which things were to be found; and when they had finished tying up the sweetmeats, showed her where to place them.

While the housekeeper and her young servant were thus engaged, Betty appeared at the door, saying, "Joan Clark, if you please, the dinner is ready."

"Betty, if you please," returned Mrs. Timmins, "you will desire the cook to send Joan's dinner here, with a cup of small beer."

Betty tossed her head, and was gone in a moment: nevertheless, the housekeeper's orders were obeyed, and Joan was directed to take her dinner at a small table in one corner of the room.

Joan Clark had scarcely finished her dinner, and sat down to hem a sheet, under the direction of Mrs. Timmins, when a boy who was under the butler came to prepare the second table in the housekeeper's room; and as there were many specimens of old-fashioned finery placed upon the board, and many remnants of good things from the first table, Joan was filled with admiration at this astonishing set out, and her admiration increased when the company who were to partake of the dinner entered the room.

These persons consisted of Mr. Thomas the butler, a man of no small importance in his own esteem, a portly gentleman, and as well dressed as my lord himself; Mr. Emery, the house-steward; Miss Jenny, and Mrs. Bibs; with two or three other gentlemen out of livery, and ladies' maids belonging to visiters. All these came pouring in at the sound of the dinner-bell; and every eye, as the company passed to the table, fell upon Joan, who had risen up, courtesying to each person.

"Who have you got here, Mrs. Timmins?" said Mrs.

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Bibs, smiling: "a specimen of the last Bond-street fashions, I reckon."

"Isn't it Clark's daughter, of the Red-lane?" said Mr. Emery. "What's she to do here, Mrs. Timmins? Have you any beans for her to set, or vetches to dress?"

"She is to wait on me," returned Mrs. Timmins, with gravity. "Joan, sit down and mind your sewing: no need to stand and courtesy; there are no strangers here."

Mrs. Timmins knew pretty well how to keep order at the second table; and when a certain expression of countenance, and a peculiar prim of the mouth were observed in the good housekeeper, the subject which had excited these symptoms was never pursued any farther. Nothing more was, therefore, said about Joan in her presence; though, on Mrs. Timmins being called out a moment, several expressions of ridicule were hazarded, but couched in such terms as Joan herself could not understand.

Joan continued at her needle till bedtime, and then went up with her mistress; and, after attending her to bed, withdrew to her own little room, where she knelt down and thanked God for all her comforts.

In the morning, at a time before appointed, she was at Mrs. Timmins's bedside, and helped her to dress; after which, her mistress directed her to put her room to rights, polish the floor with a long scrubbing-brush, and then come down into the housekeeper's room. Many were the directions which she gave her about folding her clothes, and putting the curtains and bedclothes in a proper form; finishing all with a charge to make the oaken floor shine like a looking-glass.

Joan hearkened to every word she said, as if her life depended on it; and having put every thing else in order, she was beginning to scrub with all her might, when Betty came in from an adjoining room, and said, "Why, Joan Clark, what be you about?"

"Polishing the mistress's room," replied Joan.

"La!" said Betty, "and what for?"

"The mistress bid me," returned Joan.

"And why is her room to shine brighter than my lady's?"

Joan made no answer. On which, Betty began thus to express herself: "A pretty life you'll have of it, truly,

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if you hearken to all her whims and fancies. I would no more be such a slave to her as you are, than I'd throw myself out of yon window. Why, what is she, I should like to know? Isn't she a servant, for all the world, just as you are?" with a great deal more to the same purpose, which Joan did not hear: for she went on scrubbing with all her might, and thus drowned the sound of Betty's voice by a still louder noise. "Don't you hear, Joan Clark?" said Betty, placing her hand on the brush.

"Han't you got nothing to do?" returned Joan, in a broad country dialect: "can't you find nothing to do in your own rooms, Mrs. Betty?"

Betty tossed her head, uttered some strange exclamation, and took herself out of the room, saying, "Why, I do believe that the girl is a natural!"

Though Joan heard these words, she took no notice, but went on with her work. And having done as much scrubbing as she thought sufficient for one day, she locked the door, and went down in time to receive her breakfast from Mrs. Timmins, the party in the housekeeper's room having just finished their morning repast of tea and hot rolls.

PART II.

And now, Mrs. Timmins and Joan Clark being, as we have already seen, settled with each other, they went on very comfortably together. To be sure, the housekeeper found that Joan was not what the world would call a bright girl: she was very slow in learning any thing new; but she had this good quality, that what she once learned she never forgot, and was to be depended on. "And," as Mrs. Timmins often said, "if it is but a little that a person does, yet, if that little is done faithfully, something, at any rate, may be brought to account."

When Joan had been about a month at The Hall, leave was given her to go home with her parents on the Sunday from church. O what a joyful meeting was this! Kitty fried a bit of bacon and two or three pancakes on the occasion, and the happy family sat down

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to enjoy themselves. It was on this occasion that the good father, in his plain way, gave some excellent advice to his daughter.

Joan, for some little service that she had done for one of the maids belonging to a lady who was visiting at the hall, had been presented with a shilling; and this shilling she brought to her mother. "Your mother won't have it, child," said the father; "keep it for yourself: we want nothing from you but good-will and duty. And now you know the plain truth: so don't be getting things together for us, it might be a snare in your way. It's no use talking, we won't have it." And then the good father proceeded to speak on the subject of religion, telling his daughter that nothing but an abiding sense of the presence of God would be sufficient to keep her upright and honest in the world. And he proceeded to say, that this sense of the divine presence was what no man had by nature, but was the work of the Holy Spirit, whose blessed influences are procured for the assistance of sinful man through the death of Christ; whereby God the Father is reconciled to his offending creatures, and they who were formerly the slaves of sin are made capable of all the supports and consolations of the children of God.

After their dinner, as there was no evening service, the happy little family sat talking and reading their Bible before the fire; and about eight o'clock John walked across the park with his daughter, and took his leave at the gate of the garden.

The next day, my Lord and Lady Oakwood came into the housekeeper's room, which they seldom did, and spoke, as their custom was, in a very condescending and kind manner to Mrs. Timmins; after which, her ladyship, turning towards Joan, said, "And how does Joan Clark get on, Timmins?"

Joan blushed when she heard her name from the mouth of such a lady; and Mrs. Timmins answered, "Poor Joan is not over clever, my lady: but one thing I will say of her—she does as she is bid, and that, as far as I can judge, out of sight as well as in."

"And pray, my good Timmins," remarked my lord, "what better would you say of a girl, than that she does as she is bid? If you can assert the same respecting her at Christmas, which is nearly three months from the present time, I will give you leave to present her

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with a gown out of the money I allow you for such purposes."

Joan blushed, and courtesied, and blushed again, and, as Mrs. Timmins stood close to her, whispered something in her ear.

"What does she say?" asked my lord. "Let us hear."

"Why, my lord," returned Mrs. Timmins, "she says, if your lordship pleases, might the gown be for her mother?"

Lord and Lady Oakwood both smiled; and my lord, as he went out of the room, said, "The gown must be fairly won first, and then Mrs. Timmins must judge who is to be the wearer."

It was about this time, that Joan having learned the places of every thing, Mrs. Timmins began to employ her in giving out the candles, soap, linen, and other articles in her presence; charging her very particularly about these things, and telling her that she was to take in the linen which had been used in exchange for that which was clean.

When Joan was first employed in this way, the servants gave her many black looks: but, as the housekeeper was present, no one dared to speak.

The winter was now coming on, and Mrs. Timmins felt some approaching symptoms of her old complaint, the rheumatism: she was, however, enabled to creep about till Christmas; a few days after which she found herself, one morning, so thoroughly disabled by pain, as to be incapable of moving from her bed.

This was a sad tale to tell Joan when she came to her in the morning. And the old lady uttered her complaints in such a dolorous accent, that the poor girl, to her great astonishment, burst into tears, and cried out, "O dear! O dear! what's to be done? what be I to do?"

"Much the same, my good girl," said the housekeeper, "as what you usually have done. When the manager of a family is unwell, if all those who are under them would go on just in the old way, there would be no farther trouble than what arises from the mere care of the sick. You look to the stores, and be a faithful good girl, and all will do well."

"Oh, mistress! mistress!" said Joan, "but who will take care of you?"

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"My good Joan," replied Mrs. Timmins, softened from her usual solemnity by these tokens of affection, "there are many in the house who will take care of me, and attend to me as long as my wits are about me. But who is there, Joan, who will keep the keys, and give out the stores in an honest upright way, unless I can trust you?"

"Trust me!" said Joan. "O, mistress, have you none to trust but such a poor thing as me?"

"But will you try to be faithful, Joan?"

Joan sighed, and then said, "The Lord help me, I am a poor creature."

"Well, take the keys," said Mrs. Timmins, "and fasten them well to your side; and go down and give out the tea, and send Betty to me."

Joan took the keys, and, in order the better to secure them, she fastened a riband through the hook, and tied it round her waist; after which, she went mournfully down to the housekeeper's room, to announce the sickness of Mrs. Timmins, and to send Betty to her.

In the housekeeper's room she found the ladies' maids waiting for their breakfast; and when she told them the news, Mrs. Bibs said, "Well, child, hand me the tea-chest and the key: do let us have some breakfast."

Joan took the cup in which the tea was measured, and delivered the usual quantity to Mrs. Bibs.

"Give me the tea-chest, child," said the lady's maid; "and don't you be thinking of prescribing to your betters."

Joan made no answer: on which, all the company began upon her, and bade her mind her own affairs, and not think of *housekeepering* it over them.

Joan took no notice, but sat down to her sewing.

"I say, child, give me the key," said Mrs. Bibs. "Don't you hear?"

"Yes, madam," replied Joan, "yes, I hears."

"And why won't you do as you are bid?" asked Miss Jenny.

"I am doing as I am bid," said Joan; "I am doing what mistress bid me."

"And what's that?" said Mrs. Bibs. "Did she bid you be impertinent to your betters?"

Joan looked up from her work, and said, "No, madam, I don't mean to be impertinent: I begs pardon if I be."

The entrance of Mr. Emery, the house-steward, put

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an end to the dispute, and Joan was left in quiet till the ladies' maids took their departure.

After Joan had breakfasted, and had seen the things locked away, she went up again to her mistress; during which time, it was spread through all the lower offices of the hall that the housekeeper was confined to her bed, the doctor sent for, and the keys actually hanging to Joan Clark's apron-string.

I shall not repeat all that was said on this occasion; but only add, that when Joan came down from her mistress with orders respecting what was to be given out to the cook and other persons, she found Betty and the cook in the housekeeper's room. "O," said Betty, "we are waiting for you, Joan. So, you have got the keys. See what comes of being a good girl. Well, you are honest, to be sure; that every one must say."

Joan was somewhat surprised at the civil manner in which Betty spoke to her: however, she took little notice of it, and opening the door of the store-room, said she would presently bring out what they wanted. But they pushed in after her; and while she was busy with the cook, Betty began to examine all the things on the shelves, exclaiming, "La! what's this? and what's that, Joan?"

Joan, however, had her eye on her; and as she was opening the sugar-jar, Charlotte came screaming in, crying, "Joan Clark, run for your life: mistress is in a fit, and calling for you! Run, child, run!"

Joan coloured and trembled, but answered coolly, "Well, be pleased to walk out from here, and I'll follow."

"O, you must not wait a moment," said Charlotte; "Mrs. Timmins may be dead before you see her else."

"Go out from this place then," said Joan. "I ben't going to stir till you are all out of this room."

"Only give me my candles," said Betty, "and I'll go."

"And give me the catsup, and the pickles, and the capers, and all I want," added the cook.

"No," returned Joan, "I'll not give any one of you another bit or drop till I have seen mistress: and so walk out."

"Upon my word," said the cook, "and this from Joan Clark!"

"Yes," said Joan, "it is from me; and here I will stand till you go out."

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"What! do you take us for thieves!" asked Betty.

Joan made no answer.

"Them keys on your side make you so saucy you don't know whether you stands on your heels or your head, child," said the cook.

Joan was still silent, but stood with her eyes fixed steadily on all her three fellow-servants, who were preparing to flame out again upon her, when my lady's voice was heard in the housekeeper's room. Neither did it appear how long she had been there: for certain it was, that she had heard something of what had passed; for, as the three servants skulked by her to get out of the room, she said, "What is that you have been saying to Joan? While she keeps the keys, I insist on it that you don't interfere with her. Remember that she, and not you, will be accountable, if there is any waste during the illness of Mrs. Timmins."

Lady Oakwood then walked into the store-room to Joan, admired the neatness of every thing, lamented the illness of Mrs. Timmins, and gave Joan some very good advice respecting faithfulness; assuring her, that if she was found to be careful during the housekeeper's illness, she would have her reward in the respect of her betters. She also told her that she had just left the housekeeper in a very comfortable way.

Joan was much strengthened in her duties by the encouragement given by her lady, and was enabled to take such care of the stores, and was so attentive to her mistress during her illness, that Mrs. Timmins not only presented her with a gown for her mother, but also with one for herself; and, as Joan had not been at home during Mrs. Timmins's illness, she was indulged, on the Sunday after her mistress's return to her post, with the permission of walking home from church, and taking the gown in her pocket; and as there was a deep snow on the ground, she was allowed to stay all night.

O what a happy evening was that which Joan spent in her humble parents' house! The wind, indeed, blew and whistled among the high trees in the park, and it was but a little wood fire round which the contented parents and their humble child spent their evening: but the good man was earnest in persuading his daughter to keep the way of holiness. And though he spoke of a holy life and its blessed causes and effects in plain and ordinary language, yet any Christian, how-

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ever exalted and refined, might have heard him with pleasure, and dwelt with delight on every word which fell from his lips.

On the Monday morning, when Joan returned to the hall, she found it all in a bustle; for one of the footmen the night before had been reading in bed, and, falling asleep, his curtains caught fire; and the house, in consequence, might have been burned down, had it not been for Mr. Emery, who smelt the smoke, and arrived in time to put out the flame.

In consequence of this, my lord had issued orders to Mrs. Timmins and Mr. Emery, or Mr. Thomas, to see that all fire and candle were put out in the servants' rooms by eleven o'clock every night. The servants had just heard these orders, and there were consequently a great many gloomy faces in the servants' hall. It was not, however, any affair of Joan's, and she retired to her sewing in the corner without giving the subject a single thought.

A few weeks after this, however, Mrs. Timmins having kept Joan up rather later than usual to rub her ankle, sent her to her own room in the dark, as it was considerably after eleven. As Joan was crossing the passage she dropped something out of her hand, and stooping down to grope for it, she saw the reflection of a light under the door of the housemaids' room. Now she the rather wondered at this, as Mrs. Timmins, when she came up to bed, had seen the maids put out their candle; and as the light became stronger, and was reflected almost like a moonbeam along the shining floor of the gallery, she went up to the door, and knocking gently, called to the maids within to put out the candle. Receiving, however, no reply, she called and knocked louder; still no answer was given. In the mean time she began to smell smoke, and heard a crackling noise; on which she tried to force the door, which was bolted: at length, however, with a violent push she burst it open, and saw a candle among some clothes on a chair near a bed. It seems that the candle had fallen from the socket and set the clothes on fire, which were then all in a flame.

In the bed were Charlotte and Betty, both asleep. Joan rushed into the room, and throwing a blanket, which she snatched from the bed, upon the flames, presently put them out, but not till she had wakened both

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the maids, and brought out Mrs. Timmins, limping, in her night-gown.

A tinder-box soon betrayed the means by which the young women had procured the light; and some new ballads which lay on the bed explained the reason why this light had been desired. There was, however, a great bustle about this business the next day; and Charlotte and Betty would certainly both have been sent away, had they not begged pardon, and promised never to be guilty of a like offence. But after this, their contempt and envy of Joan were turned into downright hatred, which they took occasion to show in a way that I shall presently describe.

It happened one day that Mrs. Timmins and Joan, being very busy up-stairs in airing some old silks and satins, of which the housekeeper had a mighty store, Betty was called for on some occasion; and being in the room among all the litter, she contrived to secrete Mrs. Timmins's green silk purse with golden tassels and all its contents, and to hurry it away into her own room, where she hid it in a bag of rags, among shreds and rubbish of all kinds. This purse contained a private store of Mrs. Timmins's, being part of her salary; and not being in constant use, was not immediately missed.

In the mean time Betty, with her friend Charlotte, was watching for an opportunity; and one day, when Mrs. Timmins had suddenly called Joan away, they contrived to slip the purse into her box, which was unlocked, and to slide it under the clothes.

They had scarcely done this mean and dishonest action, before Joan, remembering that she had not locked her box or her door, returned, and, as she thought, made every thing safe.

The next day Mrs. Timmins, having occasion to go to her store, went to the place where it was usually kept, and found it missing. She then searched into her long pockets, her work-bags, her drawers, and her boxes; but all in vain. She called Joan and questioned her; and afterward going into the housekeeper's room, she summoned a general council; and by the advice of Mr. Emery a search was set on foot, and the servants were compelled not only to turn their pockets inside out, but also to deliver their keys for the inspection of their boxes.

Mr. Thomas and Mr. Emery were to search in the

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men's rooms, and Mrs. Bibs and Mrs. Timmins in those of the maids.

When every box had been examined in vain, Mrs. Timmins, coming to Joan's door, said, "For form's sake we will look here; but I am sure that poor Joan Clark is as honest a girl as ever was born."

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Bibs, "how you are wrapped up in that girl, Mrs. Timmins! I dare say she is never a bit honester than her neighbours."

"Well, we shall see," said Mrs. Timmins, bridling; "so walk in."

The door was unlocked, and the box was unlocked; one thing after another was pulled out: till at length the lost purse was seen, glittering with its golden rings and spangles, at the very bottom. Mrs. Bibs lifted it up in triumph, exclaiming, "There's for you, Mrs. Timmins; so much for your pattern of honesty!" While the poor housekeeper, though she had recovered her purse and the ten guineas within, was so shocked and disappointed that she burst into an agony of tears.

Mrs. Bibs did not, however, stay to condole with her, but marched along the gallery and down stairs with unusual dignity, and entered the housekeeper's room, daintily holding up the purse between her finger and thumb. "Well," said she, "I have been the successful one at last; here is the lost sheep—and where do you think it was found?" and her eye glanced on Joan's face. "Where, indeed, where should it be found, but in Madam Honesty's box there?—in the modest Joan Clark's chest, neatly packed under the clothes?"

I might well despair of repeating the variety of exclamations which at that moment burst from the assembly; some of the company rejoicing at, and others lamenting, the downfall of the poor girl; but as it was necessary to make an example of her, Mrs. Timmins was proceeding to send her out of the house, when Mr. Emery, asking for a nearer view of the purse, and looking at the tassels, he observed a little shred of notched riband, which had entwisted itself with the gold wire. He pulled this carefully out, and opening it as much as it would admit, "Green and yellow," he exclaimed, "with a cast of purple! Now, what woman in this house has a riband of these colours?"

As he spoke Betty blushed, and the terrified Joan looked up.

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"Go up again, Mrs. Timmins," said Mr. Emery, "and search in the maids' rooms for a riband which will match this shred."

Mrs. Timmins immediately followed Mr. Emery's advice; and while she and Mrs. Bibs were absent an awful pause ensued, during which Betty changed colour twenty times, and seemed ready to faint.

At length the steps of the two matrons were heard on the staircase; and a moment afterward, Mrs. Timmins appeared with Betty's bag, in which were not only a few shreds of the same kind of riband, but a small portion of the wire of the gold tassel, which had been caught by these shreds, and torn off in the haste with which the young woman had snatched the purse out of the bag.

The terrified Betty was unable to withstand all this evidence; but bursting into tears and falling on her knees, she confessed all she had done, and the part which Charlotte had taken in the business. And these two young women thought themselves well off in being permitted to leave the house without further punishment.

Thus it appears that nothing is more difficult than to injure those who are truly upright and honest, and that the Almighty may bring our foul deeds to light by circumstances which it would be impossible to guard against.

After this circumstance Joan was thoroughly restored to the confidence of Mrs. Timmins, and continued in her service for three years or more, during which time there was nothing remarkable in her whatever but her fidelity; for her person was clumsy, and she never could get rid of her countrified gait, or quite lose the strong accent in which she spoke. With her needle she was slow, and far from handy; and there was no natural sprightliness in her manner. But Mrs. Timmins overlooked all these things, in consideration of her rare and undeviating honesty; "For," as the good old servant would often say to her lady, "I can hire a seamstress to sew linen; I can call in a neighbour to converse with me; I can get a clever cook and clean housemaid for money; but where, my lady, is the servant to be met with to whom I can give my keys, and be sure not to be robbed, or into whose hands I can put a purse of untold gold and have a faithful account of every penny? Why, my lady, there is now some comfort in being ill and keeping my bed; I am sure, when I come down at

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the end of a week, a fortnight, or a month, to find all things in order as I left them."

Lady Oakwood smiled at Mrs. Timmins's idea of the comfort of being ill, and ordered that Kitty and John should be remembered every Christmas as long as their daughter did so well.

And now I must finish, in as few words as possible, the history of Joan.

When this young woman had reached the age of twenty-one, my lord's family was greatly afflicted with the typhus fever. It was a terrible time. My lord was first taken ill; then my lady and several of the servants; but all so near together, that there was not time to remove the children before they took the infection.

My lord's only son was at that time just eleven years old. He sickened immediately after his parents; and their anxiety respecting him was the more dreadful, because they could not attend to him. As Mrs. Bibs was ill too, Mrs. Timmins had put Joan to attend on my lady, when she herself could not be with her; and Lady Oakwood had found her so very kind and attentive, so wakeful, so tender, that she would not rest when she heard her son was ill, till she had transferred this tender nurse to him, recommending the child to her care with tears in her eyes.

Here, indeed, was a triumph of fidelity over every other quality. Joan went to the young lord, and was his watchful and faithful nurse night and day, till the little boy was pronounced out of danger; at which time this trusty girl, wholly exhausted and worn out, was carried to her bed to be nursed through the same fever from which the rest of the family were then recovering.

Joan lay long on a bed of sickness; and the little lord, when able to leave his room, used daily to come to her door to inquire after her, always declaring that he should have died if Joan had not been so kind to him all night and all day.

Joan at length got better; and as soon as she was able to bear it, he came to her, and taking her to a window of her room which looked into the park (for during her illness she had been moved into a room more airy than her own), "There, Joan," he said, "look out at that window: do you see the lake?"

"Yes, sure, my lord," said Joan.

"And that wood on the other side, by the temple?"

"Yes, my lord, I do," replied she.

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"And that little bit of green land above the wood, where the white horse is feeding?"

"Yes, I sees it, my lord," said Joan.

"And do you see the chimneys of a cottage peeping up above the trees?"

"Yes, my lord," replied the young woman.

"That is a pretty cottage, Joan," said the little lord, "and it has a garden, and rose-trees, and pinks, and old man, and it is nicely furnished; and there the person is to live who is to teach the poor children that belong to the cottages in the dingle; and that person is to pay no rent, and to have five shillings a week. Now can you guess the name of that person?"

"No, sure, my lord, no," said Joan; "no, indeed."

"But I can," said the little boy; "and it is Kitty Clark; and her husband will not have farther to go to his work than he has now. And I got the place for your mother, Joan, because you were so good to me when I was sick, and you prayed for me in the night when I was so very ill; I heard it, though you thought I did not; and so, Joan, I asked papa, and Kitty Clark is to have the house. So don't think I have forgotten your kindness, or that you never once went to sleep all the time I was in pain." So saying, the little boy clapped his hand on hers, and went jumping out of the room, leaving Joan actually sobbing for joy.

Twelve years or more are now passed since the parents of Joan went to the cottage which the young lord showed to their daughter; twelve happy and peaceful years, ten of which Joan spent in my lord's house, under good Mrs. Timmins. But by my last accounts, she is married to one of the gardeners, and lives in a cottage in the shrubbery; and as Mrs. Timmins is getting very infirm, there is scarce a day in which she does not come to the hall to help her old mistress.

The young lord is become a truly excellent young man—excellent in the best sense of the word; and he to this day affirms that his first ideas of true religion were given him in the observations he made, during his illness, on the conduct of poor Joan Clark.

And now, my dear reader, I hope that this little narrative has convinced you that a faithful, upright conduct is more profitable even in this world than many other qualities of a more brilliant and striking kind.

END OF JOAN; OR, TRUSTWORTHY.

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THE

YOUNG FORESTER.

PART I.

In a certain royal forest in one of the southern counties in England, there was, a few years ago, an ancient mansion, which had formerly been the habitation of a noble family, but which of late years had become the residence of persons employed as keepers of the deer.

This mansion, which had been built about the time of Queen Elizabeth, was constructed of large cross and upright beams, filled up with lath and plaster. These beams were painted black, and their projecting ends carved into strange shapes, resembling heads of lions, dragons, and monsters of various kinds. The intervals between the timbers had formerly been washed white, but time had changed their colour into a dingy brown; and in many places the plaster having fallen quite away, admitted the air and light into the inner apartments, through the bare laths. The upper stories of this ancient dwelling projected considerably over the lower ones. According to the fashion of the days in which the building had been first erected, the windows were high and narrow, with small casements formed of a thick greenish glass, through which any outward object could be but indistinctly seen. The house presented two regular fronts, one towards the north, and the other to the south; each front consisting of two gable ends, most curiously and particularly adorned with sundry strange carvings and curious devices of the kind before mentioned. A large door presented itself in the centre of each front. The situation of this dwelling was, as I before said, in a royal forest: on three sides the trees and brushwood encroached upon the house, excepting where they were in some degree kept off by the old

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garden wall: but towards the south, through a wide opening in the forest, appeared a beautiful prospect of plain country, with corn-fields, cottages, villages, and churches —beyond which was the sea, extending itself as far as the eye could reach.

When the house was first deserted by its more noble inhabitants, and appointed by the ranger of the forest as a habitation for the keepers of the deer, care had been taken to divide it into two dwellings, by closing up all the doors of communication in the centre of the building both above and below; and at the same time the mansion had been stripped of all its most valuable ornaments and furniture. There still, however, remained some pictures of ancient date in the long galleries and chambers above stairs, together with a few old-fashioned bedsteads and testers, whose faded and decayed hangings had once been very rich and valuable.

Having now described the house, which was by no means so comfortable a habitation for a poor family as a tight and neat little cottage would have afforded, I shall proceed to describe the two families which occupied this roomy dwelling about the date of my story, which, as nearly as I can judge, is fifty years back from the present day.

The old mansion was, as I have already told my reader, divided into two distinct tenements: one fronting the north, and having no prospect but that which trees and bramble bushes, mixed with old garden walls and ruined outhouses, could offer; and the other looking towards the south, which was far the most lightsome and agreeable of the two dwellings, not only enjoying the rays of the sun, which never visited the other side, but at the same time commanding as wide and pleasant a view as any country could afford.

In this last house lived one John Webb, a person who had acted for many years as gamekeeper in the family of the nobleman who was ranger of the forest. Having been a favourite with this nobleman from a boy, this person was, on his marriage, promoted to the place of head keeper of his majesty's deer; a situation which, considering the temptations it held out to dishonesty and insobriety, he was by no means qualified to occupy.

John Webb, from having lived long in a great family, and having associated a good deal with the nobleman himself in his quality of gamekeeper, had acquired such

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a turn of behaviour as enabled him to conceal much roguery under a smooth appearance. Having also in his youth been a very well-looking person, he retained in mature age so fresh a colour and so smooth a brow, that few better looking men of his age were anywhere to be seen. John Webb's wife also had been a servant in my lord's family, and she prided herself not a little upon her genteel manners, as well as upon certain old silks, satins, lace head-dresses, and ruffles, which she had received at her marriage as presents from her lady.

When John Webb was appointed to the situation of keeper of the deer, he might have done very well in an honest way, and have been much respected; for he had a genteel allowance, and many privileges. Moreover, his lord furnished three rooms for him in the old house, which were quite as much as he could have occasion for. But when he found, after being installed in his new office, that he might add a little to his honest gains by pilfering and poaching, he had not grace sufficient to resist the temptation. Moreover, he contrived to scrape acquaintance with certain smugglers on the coast, whose goods he undertook to conceal in the deep and wide cellars and other hiding-places in and about the old house.

It was impossible for John Webb to carry on all these underhand works in so secret a manner as entirely to avoid the observation of his neighbour and assistant, James Taylor, on the other side of the wall. Judging it best, therefore, to make a virtue of necessity, he pretended to place great confidence in James, by letting him into all his schemes: with which, by-the-by, the other was as well acquainted before his neighbour had opened his mind to him as afterward. Taylor, however, affected to take all in good part; and from that time these two men became brothers and partners in iniquity, although, like most partners of the same sort, they heartily despised and detested each other.

But, as I have given my reader an exact description of John Webb and his family, I think I cannot do less than describe the other family with as much particularity.

I never could learn how James Taylor got into the place of under keeper of the deer; since he was a man who had nothing whatever to recommend him excepting that he was as brave as a lion, and an exceeding good

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shot. He scarcely ever missed his aim, and prided himself on knocking down a woodcock flying, which is what few marksmen can do. James was a great bony man, hard-featured and rough-tongued; and having used himself so long to shooting, fishing, hunting, worming of dogs, breeding of cocks, and such sort of occupations, as absolutely to deaden all manner of feeling for every kind of dumb creature, it may well be supposed that his feelings towards the human species were not of the tenderest sort.

James had occupied the place of under deer-keeper for some years before John Webb came to the forest, and had formed a connection with smugglers on the coast long before Mr. Webb made the proposal I have mentioned above. James would still have been glad to carry on the business alone, and to make the best of his vaults and cellars, without having a partner to share his gains. But as he was afraid of making an enemy of Webb, who he well knew had the ranger's ear, he spoke him fair, and pretended to him all the friendship imaginable.

Bridget, the wife of James Taylor, was a poor, silly, dawdling, dirty woman, who, in the absence of all family comfort (for her husband was a complete tyrant and savage at home), consoled herself with some of the smugglers' liquor, with which she generally contrived to be plentifully provided; a habit that not only gave her a pale and sickly appearance, but was gradually hastening her dissolution.

John Webb had one daughter and one son; James Taylor had one daughter and three sons. These children were nearly of the same age; and although more attention was paid to the outward appearance of John Webb's children than to that of the young Taylors, who were always covered with rags and dirt, yet the minds of both families were left entirely uncultivated: while religion or morality was never once thought of by either of them. As Mrs. Webb was always well-dressed, and her house more clean and decent than that of her filthy neighbours, she heartily despised them all together, and laid the strictest injunctions upon her children not to play with their vulgar neighbours. Parents, however, who do not teach their little ones to fear God, must not expect them to be obedient to themselves: accordingly, Andrew and Dolly Webb paid no heed whatever to their mother's commands on this subject, but spent their whole

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time with Taylor's children, whenever they could contrive to escape the observation of their mother.

And now, having given an account of these families, and the place of their habitation, I shall proceed to speak of the youngest son of James Taylor, who was indeed the only individual of the two families whose history is calculated to give a pious or humane person any pleasure.

This boy, whose name was Marten, was born several years after his two brothers and his sister. He was remarkable, when an infant, for having a very sweet and gentle aspect: notwithstanding which, as he advanced in years, he followed the example set him by his brothers and the other children; so that by the time he was six years of age, he was qualified for every kind of mischief. Among other employments of old Taylor, he frequently made money by rearing and selling fighting-cocks. He had also a cock-pit in the back yard of his wide dwelling-place; whither parties of young men often resorted on Sundays and other holydays from the neighbouring villages, to take part in this wicked amusement. On these occasions, Taylor's boys were always present; by which means little Marten in his seventh year had learned all the vile oaths and profane expressions usually employed about a cock-pit. In addition to which, before he had completed his tenth year, he understood all the arts and tricks of poaching, deer-stealing, and smuggling, in almost as perfect a manner as the oldest of the gang.

The keeper of the forest, who was himself exceedingly fond of field-sports, and kept a pack of hounds, used to send his young dogs to Taylor's and Webb's to be broken in. As these creatures were brought very young to the house in the forest, they were frequently very cruelly used by the children. Little Marten especially, when ill-treated by his brothers, would vent his rage on the puppies, beating and kicking them, and making them howl most piteously; yet, as long as he did nothing to spoil the dogs, his parents never checked him for his cruel tricks.

Field-sports, when carried on in the most lawful way, have, it is to be feared, a tendency to harden the heart and deaden the feelings; neither is it easy to conceive how a truly converted person can receive pleasure from inflicting death. But when these employments are car-

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ried on in an unlawful way, secretly, and by night, they become infinitely more productive of evil; as all those must well know who have ever had any thing to do in such concerns.

The great hall in which Taylor and his family lived was comparatively still and quiet in the daytime, excepting when the children quarrelled among themselves, or set the dogs to howl. But at night it was often filled with gangs of poachers and smugglers; when there was always a great fire kept up, fed by immense logs of wood pilfered from the forest, the blaze of which was reflected from every part of the hall. On these occasions the great oak table was often covered with pasties of venison or smaller game, and kegs of smuggled liquors. Thus would Taylor carouse with his companions, while his children, perhaps, were sleeping in one corner of the hall, the dogs in another, and the poor wife, more than half tipsy, dozing in an old arm-chair in a corner of the wide chimney. In such company as this, it could not be expected that Marten Taylor should grow in grace as he grew in stature; neither indeed was it otherwise with him than might have been expected, nor did it appear at all likely, in the ordinary course of things, that he should be extricated from his unhappy situation, and delivered from the evil influence of his parents' example. Nevertheless, the Almighty, who had purposes of mercy towards the child, led him forth, by a way which he understood not, from the deepest darkness into marvellous light.

It happened one day, when this boy was about ten years of age, that his father returning home from a part of the forest somewhat distant from his own house, found a little white dog, which seemed to have lost its way. He immediately took up the little trembling creature, and brought him home; where, presenting him to Marten, he said, "Here, my boy, it will be some sport to you to hang this little beast, and his flesh will do for carrion for the crows."

Marten received the dog from his father, and tied him up in a corner of the hall, where he now and then threw him a morsel, intending to destroy him at a convenient opportunity. When the dog became a little acquainted with his new master, Marten let him loose, and bestowed on him a few caresses, which were enough to attach

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the poor little animal to him, cruel and hard-hearted as he was.

"What are you going to do with that cur?" said Robert, his elder brother; "he is not worth keeping. Did not father tell you to hang him?"

"I shall do what I like with him," replied Marten.

"I tell you, you had best hang him," said the brother.

"So I shall," said Marten; "but not to please you."

"It's nothing to me," said the brother, "whether you hang him or not; but I think there are curs enough to yelp and bark about the house without that little ugly thing."

"I shall cut his ears and his tail," replied Marten, "and see how he looks first, before I hang him."

"Do," said the brother, "and I'll help you."

The two lads were just going to set about this cruel job, when they heard the shrill voice of their mother calling them to their dinner. So they desisted from their purpose for the present, and ran in to satisfy their appetites.

In the evening they went with their father to set springes in one of the most retired parts of the forest, which obliged them to put off their cruel business till the next day. The same evening, the brothers quarrelling about a bird's nest which they had found in the wood, came home so out of humour with each other, that Marten would not let them touch his dog, saying, he should neither have his ears cut nor be hanged by them; but that he would do with his own beast what he pleased, without their help.

Upon this, his elder brother struck him; he returned the blow, and a violent battle, no doubt, would have followed, had not the mother, who loved Marten better than all her other children, taken his part, and sent his brothers off with a threat that, if they did not cease to abuse him, they should not taste of the pasty which was prepared for their supper.

Now, although the boys knew that she had not power to keep the pasty from them, yet they gave up the matter for the present, because Marten with his dog having taken shelter behind their mother, they could not well get at him without touching her; so they thought it better to be quiet till a fitter opportunity should offer.

Marten knew pretty well what was in their minds; and accordingly he resolved to keep out of their way till

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he should have reason to think their anger somewhat cooled. So he kept close to his mother all the evening, holding his dog in his arms. And early the next morning, having procured from her a large slice of pasty, he went off to a side of the forest which his brothers seldom frequented, in quest of wood strawberries; and his little dog followed him.

Having strayed more than two miles from home, Marten arrived at a part of the forest with which he was but little acquainted. It was a kind of dingle or dell, through the bottom of which ran a brook; and along the sides of this dingle were several little winding paths, with a wooden bridge thrown over the brook below.

While Marten stood at this place looking down upon the brook and the wooden bridge, the little dog, which had hitherto followed him quietly, began to prick up his ears and listen attentively; after which he shot from his young master and ran down the dingle, pursuing the winding paths with such extraordinary quickness, that Marten could have no chance of overtaking him but by cutting across over brake and brier from one winding path to another; which he instantly attempted, calling at the same time to the dog, and using language which I should be ashamed to repeat. The dog, however, without heeding the voice of Marten, still continued to run forward, yelping as he went, as if transported with joy. Upon which Marten became so enraged, that taking up a stone, and aiming it at the dog, which was by this time crossing the bridge, he threw it at him with all his might; hoping the next moment to observe that he had struck, and perhaps materially hurt the little creature. But the stone, which was a very large one, fell heavily on the bridge, and rebounding thence, splashed into the water. At the same time, Marten saw the little dog jumping with the most vehement expressions of delight upon a gentleman who appeared at that moment from behind some spreading trees on the other side the bridge. The gentleman, while returning the caresses of the poor little creature, heard the last profane expressions of the wicked boy, and saw his hand still held up, as it had been in the act of throwing the stone.

All this passed in a moment; and Marten was thinking whether he should not take to his heels and run away, when the gentleman, calling to him, promised him

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a reward for bringing his dog, if he would but come and receive it.

When Marten heard the old gentleman's voice he at first stood still, not knowing whether he should run away or go to him at his call: for although he had never been told in so many words that profane language and cruel usage of animals were sinful, yet he perfectly understood that these things were wrong—according to that which the apostle teacheth, when speaking of the Gentiles (by which we understand the heathen nations who are unacquainted with the written word of God), that these "show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another." Rom. ii. 15. The gentleman, however, repeating his call in a mild voice, and promising him a reward for bringing back his dog, Marten came down the bank, and crossing the wooden bridge, addressed the gentleman in a clownish manner, saying, "And what will you give me for finding your dog?"

"We will consider of that matter presently," said the old gentleman, seating himself on the trunk of a tree which lay along by the way-side, and taking his little dog on his knees; "but first, my little man, I would have some conversation with you. And now tell me who you are? and where you live?"

When Marten answered this question, the old gentleman shook his head, as much as to say, "Ah! I know then that you are of a bad breed." However, he made no remark upon this subject, but proceeded thus: "And now tell me, my lad, why you threw that heavy stone at this poor little animal? and wherefore you used such shocking language?"

The poor boy hung his head, but made no answer: whereupon the old gentleman continued, "Come, my lad, sit down here upon the grass, that I may tell you why we must neither say bad words nor use any creatures ill. Would you not think it very strange if I were to come to your house and abuse your father, and kill your fowls, and beat your dogs?"

"You could not easily do that," said Marten, sulkily, "if father was at home, or brother Robert."

"Why not?" said the old gentleman.

"Because," replied the boy, "they would be apt to

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treat you after a fashion that would make you mind what you were about. For who has a right to come into father's house, and meddle and make with what belongs to him?"

"Well, then," said the old gentleman, "I ask you who has a right to abuse or injure God's creatures?"

"Why, are they not made on purpose for us?" said the boy. "Father says they are, and that we may do with them what we please."

"There is a book, my boy," said the old gentleman, "in which God has given us directions with regard to these matters, and told us how far we may be allowed the use of his creatures. Moreover, we may find in this book directions for our behaviour in every other concern of life."

"What book do you call that?" said Marten.

"The Bible," replied Mr. Hartley, which was the name of the gentleman.

"The Bible!" repeated Marten; "father has no such book."

Mr. Hartley sighed, and looked with an expression of pity on Marten, whose countenance for a moment assumed something of that expression which had, on occasion, even touched the savage hearts of his hardened parents, from the time he hung a tender infant on his mother's breast. "And did you never hear what was written in that holy Book?" said Mr. Hartley.

"No," said Marten; "I never heard any thing about it."

"Have you never been at church?" asked Mr. Hartley.

"Yes, to be sure," replied Marten; "or I should never have been christened."

"Well," thought Mr. Hartley, "we need not go to Africa to look for Pagans, there are too many of these at home." The good gentleman then proceeded to say, with much sympathy in his countenance, "So you know nothing of the Bible? Shall I tell you some things out of it?"

The boy stared, and made answer, "But what will you give me for finding the dog?"

"I will tell you by-and-by, my boy," said Mr. Hartley; "but you are not in a hurry to go home, are you?"

"No," said the boy; "for brothers will thrash me, I reckon, when I do."

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"Well, then," said Mr. Hartley, without inquiring why he was to be thrashed by his brothers, "I think you cannot do better than sit and talk with me a little."

The boy turned a shrewd look upon Mr. Hartley, as much as to say, "Why, what can engage such a person as you to converse with a child like myself!" However, he kept his seat on the grass, and listened while Mr. Hartley opened the subject of religion to him, and that in a manner so sweet and simple, as insensibly to win the boy's attention; or, to speak more properly and more truly, it pleased the Lord to give this elder of Israel such grace in the eyes of this little untaught stranger, that he gradually obtained first his ear and then his heart.

PART II.

The points which Mr. Hartley chose for his first discourse with little Marten were the nature of God, and the doctrine of the Holy Trinity—a subject which you will say was hard for an ignorant boy to take in. And so indeed it was; but perhaps the nature of the Almighty is scarcely better understood by the wisest man than by the most simple child. There are some things in religion altogether above the comprehension of man; such are the nature of God and the doctrine of the Trinity. These things, therefore, are to be considered as matters of faith, for *faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* Heb. xi. 1. Mr. Hartley also taught Marten all that we learn from Scripture of those evil spirits which kept not their first estate: and hence he proceeded to inform him of the creation of man, his original innocence, and the blessedness of his condition in paradise. He spoke also of the happy state of birds and beasts, with all the inferior tribes of animals, under the mild dominion of man. "In those days," said he, "every beast was harmless; no creature then hurt or preyed upon another; but all was peace, and love, and joy. Neither did men then feed upon the flesh of animals; but the herbs and fruits of the ground, together with the grass of the field, supplied every living creature with its innocent food." Mr. Hartley then

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went on to speak of the fall of man through disobedience, and of the dreadful change which took place on that occasion, not only in his heart and temper, but in all the circumstances of his state. "Before the fall," said Mr. Hartley, "there was neither frost nor snow, neither excessive rain nor heat; but the air was mild and temperate, and the whole frame of nature was preserved from every species of disorder. In those happy days, birds of all kinds roosted together in the same trees. The gentle dove did not then fear the hawk; and the lion would lie down by the side of the kid. Neither sin nor cruelty was then to be found in the world. But when man, the chief of God's creatures on earth, fell from his innocence, all the inferior animals seemed to change their nature: and from that time the woods and forests, the fields, lawns, and meadows, every mountain and hill, the wide ocean and the azure vault of heaven itself, have been the scenes of one continued and cruel war; bird against bird, beast against beast, fish against fish, and man against man." He then proceeded to intimate, that though it was not in man's power to put an end to this cruel war, and to restore peace upon the earth, yet that every one would be called to account for unnecessarily adding to the uneasiness of any of God's creatures. "It is true," continued Mr. Hartley, "that the Lord has given us leave to use the animals for meat; but we have no permission given us to torment them, or to please ourselves in the manner of our putting them to death: and they who do so will have as much reason to fear the anger of God, as I should have reason to dread the displeasure of your father, if I were to go to his house and misuse any creature belonging to him."

Mr. Hartley said much more than I have here room to repeat, by way of explaining the subject of his discourse; in which he at least so far succeeded as to fix Marten's attention for a considerable time. But when he found that the boy grew tired, and began to stare about him, he changed the subject, and giving him a shilling, encouraged him to ask for any little thing he might wish to possess.

Upon this, without using any ceremony, the boy replied, "I should like to have a knife to carry in my pocket, and cut my bread and cheese."

"If I give you one," said the gentleman, "will you make no bad use of it?"

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"No," said the boy: "I only want it to cut my victuals with, and to have ready in my pocket."

"Well," said the gentleman, "I shall see about it. And now," said he, "I have a little bag of money at home, which I have put by in order to purchase little presents for boys who try to please me. And if you will do what I wish you to do, I shall have no objection to spend a little of this money for you."

"And what am I to do?" said the boy.

"I would have you learn to read."

"I know my letters," said Marten; "Dolly Webb taught me them."

"That is a good beginning," said Mr. Hartley. "Will you let me teach you a little more? I shall be in the neighbourhood all this month and part of the next, and I shall walk in this wood every day about this time. Will you meet me here sometimes?"

"Perhaps I may," said the boy.

"Well, please yourself," said the old gentleman; "but you know that if you do not come you are not to have the knife."

"Will you give it me to-morrow, if I come?" said the boy.

"No," said the old gentleman, "I certainly shall not; for I shall have a great way to send for a good one, and you shall have your name put upon it, that your brothers may know it is your own: and it will take some days before all this can be done."

"Well, I will come to-morrow," said Marten, "and look about for you; but now it is time for me to go home." So, without taking any farther leave, he got up and walked away; while the old gentleman, as he looked after him, inwardly prayed that the boy might be inclined to meet him again the next day. For he felt his heart uncommonly drawn towards the little rustic, greatly pitying his situation as being the child of such notoriously bad parents. For James Taylor, although he had taken care not to be openly convicted of any enormity, was very much suspected throughout the country of being such as he really was a smuggler, a poacher, and a thief.

But before I go on with my history of little Marten, perhaps the reader may like to know something more of this good gentleman. Mr. Hartley was an old bachelor, and an exceedingly pious man. He resided in Somer-

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setshire; whence he paid a visit of two months every year to a nobleman who lived just upon the outskirts of the forest. In this nobleman's house there was a room always appointed for Mr. Hartley; and during his annual visit the good old gentleman was allowed to go in and out and do just as he pleased. He knew all the poor cottagers in the neighbourhood, and was accustomed to visit all the village schools within a walking distance; so that many were the better for his occasional sojourn in that part of the country. But his favourite haunt was the bridge and dingle before mentioned, in one corner of the forest; and thither he would often retire to read his Bible and pray.

He had brought with him this year a favourite little dog, the gift of a dear friend lately dead. This little animal was young, and, like most other young creatures, had a knack of straying it knew not whither, from its best friend. Accordingly, in one of his walks, Mr. Hartley lost his little dog, which was found the same day by James Taylor, and so fell into the hands of Marten—to whom we will now return.

When Marten got home, towards dusk, he never said a word of his adventure with Mr. Hartley, lest his brothers should force from him the shilling which the benevolent stranger had given him. And the next morning he was in twenty minds whether to meet the old gentleman again or not. But having nothing else to do, and the breach between him and his brothers not being yet made up, he thought he might as well go as not: so fetching a way about, in order that his brothers might not trace his steps, he arrived at the bridge about the appointed time. The old gentleman had already reached the place, and was sitting on the trunk of the fallen tree, about which the contiguous trees and bushes formed a kind of natural arbour.

Mr. Hartley was reading; but on hearing the child's step he looked up and welcomed him with so much heartiness, that the boy, who had not been used to kind treatment from any one but his mother, could not but feel an unusual sort of gratification. So, with more glee than good manners, he abruptly exclaimed, "You see I am come again; and what am I to do now?"

Now, were I to give this second conversation which passed between Mr. Hartley and the boy at full length, as I did the first, it would be making my story too long.

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I shall content myself therefore with saying, that he spent some of the time in going over the same ground with the boy that he had done the day before; to which he made such additions as he judged suitable to the occasion. And especially he this day spoke much to him concerning all that the Saviour had done and suffered for sinful men. After which he presented him with a little spelling-book; in which he took him through his alphabet, and taught him a lesson in spelling; labouring with him in these exercises perhaps the space of an hour. And before they parted, lest the boy should have taken any disgust at the length of the lecture, he put into his hand a paper of almonds and raisins, which he had begged of his friend's housekeeper.

When the little boy bethought himself of returning home, Mr. Hartley accompanied him part of the way, entertaining him with a discourse on such lighter subjects as he thought would attract the child towards him; telling him histories of bears, monkeys, and elephants, and such other things as Mr. Hartley had been acquainted with in his travels; for he had formerly been a very great traveller.

Little Marten did not hesitate whether he should meet Mr. Hartley or not the next day; for he set out as soon as he had breakfasted, and was looking over his little spelling-book on his seat of grass opposite the fallen tree, when the old gentleman made his appearance.

Some very pleasant smiles passed between the old gentleman and Marten this day on their first meeting; and at a remark which the gentleman made, Marten laughed outright; not indeed in a rude way, but as one highly delighted. "See, my boy," said Mr. Hartley, "perhaps the world does not think much of you or of me; but I say that there is no schoolmaster and no scholar throughout the whole world who have a finer schoolroom than we can boast of. The ceiling of our room is of a bright blue, and wide as the earth itself; our floor is of green, sprinkled over with flowers of every colour; and the sides of our apartment present woods and water-falls, with every other kind of natural beauty."

The studies of this day were only a continuance of those of the former day. But these were followed with much discourse upon the Holy Spirit, the third Person in the blessed and glorious Trinity; Mr. Hartley endeavouring to teach his little pupil something of the

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nature and offices of the Holy Spirit, how it particularly works in softening the heart, and making it tender, and kind, and gentle. This day also Mr. Hartley presented his pupil with some little nicety, which he had either begged from the housekeeper, or of which he had deprived himself; he also walked home with him part of the way, as he had done the day before, and amused him with the description of an immense serpent which he ad seen in the island of Ceylon.

On the fourth meeting between this pious gentleman and the little boy, Marten received his knife with great satisfaction, and was able to make out his own name engraved on the handle.

The daily meetings between Marten and Mr. Hartley had continued for nearly six weeks before any person in the family knew of them excepting Marten's mother, Marten having intrusted her with the secret from the first, because he knew she would keep it from his brothers. At length one of the brothers finding the knife, carried it to his father, when Marten was obligod to tell all that had passed. Old Taylor had no other objection to Marten meeting the old gentleman in the forest, but the fear lest any of his own evil deeds should thereby come to light: he was therefore under considerable alarm when he found how far the intimacy had grown between Marten and Mr. Hartley. He questioned Marten pretty closely upon all that had passed between them; and upon the boy's assuring him that the gentleman never asked him any questions about his father or his home, he seemed satisfied, and said, "Well, we will let them alone; the boy must certainly have fallen in with some Methodist preacher, since, from all I can gather, they talk of nothing but religion and such like things."

Marten feared that this circumstance would prevent his meeting Mr. Hartley again in the wood; he was therefore very glad when his father bade his brother go about his business, and not plague him any more with such fool's tales.

The time now drew near when Mr. Hartley was to return to his home; but before it arrived Marten had (through the divine blessing) acquired a great regard for the old gentleman, and could not hear of his departure without tears. Mr. Hartley saw this growing affection of the little boy, and thanked God for it, because he considered it as a token of good for the child. It was

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evident, that the pious instructions which he had daily given this little boy during the last six weeks, had produced a pleasing change in his manners and general conduct; so that he was no longer rough and surly in the one, nor careless in the other. He left off using bad words, was always diligent in learning the tasks set him by the gentleman, while his outward appearance was more decent and cleanly than formerly. He now entered with eagerness into the meaning of Mr. Hartley's sweet discourses, and would sometimes make such remarks upon them as showed that he often reflected, when alone, on religious subjects. Mr. Hartley, before he left him, gave him a collection of little stories adapted to the capacity of children, containing many pious lessons; together with the promise of a Bible when he should revisit that neighbourhood. He also taught him several prayers and hymns, explaining to him their meaning, and directing him often to repeat them. He also explained to him the nature of prayer, informing him that he was at liberty to address his prayers to any one or all of the Holy Persons of the Trinity. He taught him, likewise, the propriety of making any of his wants the subject of request in prayer to God, assuring him that the Lord would be pleased to be addressed in such a manner by a simple child. He told him, however, that he must not presume to ask any thing but in the name of his Saviour; neither should he be out of heart if he did not receive an immediate answer to his prayers; and that if the Lord should sometimes withhold from him the things which he asked, he might be assured that it was for his good; "because the Lord," continued he, "knows better what is for our good than we do ourselves."

When Mr. Hartley had said all he could think of to encourage and strengthen the boy, he promised, Providence permitting, to return into the country some time the next summer. And thus they parted; the gentleman having first presented Marten with a complete suit of winter clothes, together with a hat and shoes, in which he earnestly entreated him regularly to attend divine service.

Marten wept bitterly as he returned home, after parting from the old gentleman; and, as he walked along, he thought with pain how many months must pass away before he should see Mr. Hartley again.

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After Mr. Hartley's departure from the country, Marten hardly knew what to do with himself; for having lately been so much separated from his father and brothers, he could not take pleasure, as formerly, in their sports or employments. He therefore used to shrink from their notice, and creep up into an old closet, at the end of a long gallery, at the further end of the house; where he used to sit and study the book which Mr. Hartley left him, repeating his hymns and prayers. Sometimes also he would go out into the wood, to the same place where he had been accustomed to meet Mr. Hartley, and there he would sit down and cry. In these retired walks he had no companion but a very old hound, which had been reared by his father for the ranger of the forest, and was now sent back to the house in the forest, in his old age, with an order that he should be taken care of as long as he lived—and no doubt the ranger paid James Taylor what was just for the food of this poor animal. This old hound had lately taken very much to Marten; and no wonder, for since the boy had become acquainted with God's holy word, his feelings with respect to poor animals had undergone an entire change; insomuch that, instead of taking pleasure in any thing by which pain is given to any poor creature, he was always uneasy when it became necessary to put an animal to death, and would say, "Pray, father, put it out of its pain as soon as you can, and do not let it suffer unnecessarily." So this poor old hound became Marten's constant companion, daily following him wherever he went; and because he had lost his teeth, and could not pick up his food like the rest of the dogs, Marten often saved little bits for him out of his own dish.

Marten's brothers and sister, who had long been jealous of Mr. Hartley's notice of him, and laughed at the change which had taken place in his behaviour of late, took occasion to ridicule him very coarsely on his affection to the old hound: neither were they satisfied with teasing him in private about his odd ways, as they called them, but contrived to set their father against him by saying, that if he went on in such strange methodistical ways, he would surely turn upon them by-and-by, and go and discover all that passed in the house.

This hint startled the father, and so soured him against his younger son, that he took every opportunity of

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crossing and vexing him; and in order to this, he would sometimes vent his spite against the old hound. On one occasion of this sort, Marten ran in between his father and the poor animal, and got several of the blows which were meant for his dog.

Marten received these blows, which were very severe, without a word: but his mother, who was present, was not inclined to take the matter so quietly; her youngest son was her darling, and she could not forbear calling her husband a brute for his treatment of that dear child. Violent words now passed between the husband and wife, which ended in the husband taking up his hat and walking out of the house, cursing the poor dog as the original cause of all this disturbance, and swearing that he would be the death of him. This kind of language was so common in the mouth of James Taylor, that his family thought nothing of it.

The winter months were passed in these two families, namely, John Webb's and James Taylor's, much as they had always been. The nights were spent in poaching, stowing up or moving off smuggled goods, eating, drinking, and carousing; while in the day, all those who had been so busy during the night withdrew from the premises; so that if any one called at the house, not a creature was to be seen there but the two wives and their younger children.

Marten was yet a child, and still had such confused ideas of right and wrong that he could not exactly make out what was lawful and what was otherwise in the employments of his father. He sometimes saw him and John Webb going out openly to kill a deer, which they brought home in broad daylight; and sometimes he knew that the same work was carried on privately. He understood that he must not say a word about those persons who brought in goods at night from the sea; but he did not rightly understand what belonged to that business. On the subject, however, of cruelty to animals, and using bad language, he was more clear; he ventured, therefore, several times, when left alone with his mother, to talk to her about the punishments which in a future life awaited such practices. The poor woman, who was thoroughly stupified by drinking, being pleased to hear such fine words out of the mouth of her darling, agreed with all he said; and in this manner she led him to believe that she had as many serious thoughts

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as Mr. Hartley himself. Marten Taylor was enabled to stand his ground in a way which can hardly be believed by those who are not acquainted with the power of God in upholding those towards whom he has purposes of mercy; and this continued till the time came round for the return of Mr. Hartley.

About that time, Marten, together with the poor old hound, his constant companion, visited every day his favourite place in the wood, watching for Mr. Hartley's appearance. Marten had at length the pleasure of meeting the good old gentleman there again; when he received from his hands a handsome Bible in a strong leather case.

Mr. Hartley and Marten spent many hours together in the woods this summer; and so greatly was Mr. Hartley pleased with his little companion, that he resolved, if possible, to take the boy with him into Somersetshire, and to place him at a decent school, kept by a pious man, in his own neighbourhood. Old Taylor and his wife made several objections to this plan; but Mr. Hartley having got his friend, the great man before mentioned, to second his proposal, he at last succeeded in getting Marten out of his father's family, and conveying him to his own residence.

Marten attended the school three years, and made as great improvement as could be expected. During his absence from home his mother died suddenly, of some disorder brought on by drinking. Old Webb and his wife were also removed during this interval, leaving the management of their house to their son, a young man of about twenty-one years of age, and a daughter about sixteen.

Mr. Hartley still came annually into the country, though he deemed it not prudent to bring Marten with him. At length, however, he complied with the boy's earnest entreaty for permission to see his father once again. Accordingly the good old gentleman took Marten from school, clothed him in a neat livery, and brought him into the country in the capacity of his own servant.

The day after Marten arrived in the country, he ran over, as early as his master could spare him, to see his father, his brothers, and his sister. On reaching his father's door, he found it open; and walking into the hall, he there saw his sister sitting at a table in close conver-

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sation with young John Webb. She started at the sight of her brother, but did not know him till he spoke; as he was not only much grown, but greatly improved both in appearance and manner. She did not, however, seem particularly pleased at seeing him; but coolly said, "What! is the old gentleman tired of you? And are you come home for good, Marten?"

"I am come for good, I hope, sister," he answered, "but not, I believe, to stay."

Marten then asked many questions about his father and his brothers; and the tears started in his eyes when he looked towards the corner where his mother used to sit.

While he was talking with his sister and John Webb, his brother Robert came in with a sack, which was not quite empty, thrown over his shoulders. He started when he saw Marten's livery; but recollecting his brother in a moment, "What, youngster!" he said, "who would have thought of seeing you again?"

Marten told him that he was not come to make a long visit, but was going home in an hour or two; upon which Robert brightened up a little, and having stowed his sack in some convenient corner, he said to his sister, "Alice, how comes the table to be so empty? have you nothing either to eat or drink in the house?"

While Alice was gone to the pantry for something wherewith to furnish the table, Marten began to ask many questions of his brother; and among other things he said, "And what is become of Echo? where is my poor old hound?"

Robert grinned a malicious smile, and said, "He is dead."

"How long has he been dead, Robert?" said Marten.

"Who are you talking of?" asked Alice, as she returned into the hall with half a cheese under one arm and part of a loaf under the other.

"Of old Echo, sister," said Marten.

"Echo!" repeated she,—"why, he has been dead as many years as you have been away."

"And how did he meet with his death?" said Marten, looking from his sister to his brother.

"Why, father kicked him to death; and that was no more than he deserved," said Robert.

Marten coloured, but repressed his anger, saying, calmly, "What had he done?"

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"Done!" replied Robert, "why, he stole a steak off the table which was to have been grilled for father's dinner."

"I suppose, then, he was hard pressed by hunger," said Marten, firmly.

"And father came in," continued Robert, with equal firmness, "and kicked him as he deserved: so he crawled into yonder corner, which used to be his favourite bed in your time, and there he died."

Marten was going to say what those might expect who could use a poor dumb creature so barbarously; but remembering that it was his own father who had committed this cruel action, he remained silent for a moment. Then rising in haste, he took his leave, saying that he would call again before he left the country to see his father; and thus he departed.

As Marten was hastening from his father's door, in a state of mind which it would be hard to describe, he was accosted by a well-looking girl, in a rustic habit, with a bundle of sticks on her head. At first he did not know her; but looking again, he recollected Dolly Webb. He was surprised to see how much she was grown, and how bright and black her eyes were: he did not, however, stop to talk to her, but hastened on, fearing to see his father, whom he did not wish to meet in the present state of his mind.

PART III.

On Marten's return to his master, he made him acquainted with all that had passed; when his master advised him to see his father but once more before his leaving the country, and upon no account to be often going to the house.

The two months of Mr. Hartley's visit in the country now drew to a conclusion; during which time Marten saw his father but once only, and was then received by him very coolly. After which he returned with Mr. Hartley to that gentlemen's house, and continued in his service as much as four years more.

Marten did not visit his native village during the four

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years above-mentioned; neither did he hear much of what was passing at home, excepting once from a man whom he happened to meet with, from a village on the skirts of the forest, who was well acquainted with his father. From this man he learned that his brother Robert and his father had fallen out; in consequence of which Robert had gone off, it was supposed, with the smugglers. He also reported that John Webb and Alice Taylor were much attached to each other, and that there had been some talk of their settling together; though it was supposed that old Taylor would oppose it. The man gave but a poor account of Marten's second brother, William, whom he described as being exceedingly undutiful to his aged father. Of John and Dolly Webb the man gave a very indifferent character also. So that Marten could find no comfort whatever in any tidings from home, neither could he discover any method by which he might benefit his family; though he never neglected to pray for them with much affection and earnestness. And as he could write a good hand, he addressed a letter to his father, in which he tenderly reminded him of the value of his soul, and besought him to lose no time in turning to God. In this letter he enclosed a one pound Bank of England note, which was the first money he had ever saved.

James Taylor, who had experienced nothing but unkindness from his other children, was cut to the heart on the receipt of so affectionate a letter, accompanied with such a present; insomuch that being wholly overcome by so unexpected a circumstance, he went abroad into the forest for the purpose of giving vent to his feelings, often exclaiming in his solitary walk—"O my generous and beloved boy! how little do I deserve such a son!"

Marten Taylor had by this time attained his full growth, and, from becoming really pious, had acquired an openness of countenance and a graciousness of manner which made him agreeable to every one with whom he conversed. He was very fond of his master, and very grateful to him for all his kindness, of which he was extremely sensible; while Mr. Hartley felt for him an almost parental regard, without the most distant thought of ever parting with him. But things were ordered otherwise—for, soon after Marten had completed the fourth year of his service, a letter was sent

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to him by a neighbour, with the information that his brother William had enlisted himself as a soldier, and was gone off. Marten showed the letter to his master, saying, "My father is now left alone, and has none to comfort him. To be sure, he has not shown me much affection of late years; but, notwithstanding this, I cannot possibly forget that he is still my father."

"I know what you would say, Marten," returned Mr. Hartley; "that you think it your duty to go to him. And as you herein appear to judge rightly, sorry as I shall be to part with you, I will by no means restrain you from putting your good purpose in execution. You shall go now and stay with your father so long as you can be of any use to him. But remember that the good of his soul is to be preferred to his worldly interest—'For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?'" Matt. xvi. 26.

Not long after this a separation took place between Marten and his master, and not without much sorrow on both sides. So taking his bundle on his back, Marten journeyed across the country towards his native forest; at which place he arrived early the succeeding day.

Now it happened that the night before Marten reached his home, his father met with a very sad accident from a spring-gun which had been laid in a gentleman's grounds, where James was accustomed to wander at untimely hours. Notice had been given that such an instrument was prepared; but it so happened that this notice had not come to the hearing of James Taylor.

The wound which old Taylor had received was not in a vital part: his arm had only suffered; and although it gave him great pain, yet he had sufficient strength to crawl back to his own door, where he fell down in a fainting-fit.

It was just about day-dawn that the miserable man reached his home; and he lay at the door of his house till his daughter opened it in the morning. Her unhappy father had just then revived, and had presence of mind enough to tell his daughter not to alarm the neighbours, but to help him in as well as she could; which she accordingly did, grumbling all the while, and repeatedly inquiring, in a very undutiful manner, what unlucky brabble he had got into.

There was no bed in the lower apartment, and it was impossible for the poor man to get up-stairs with-

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out assistance. But in the corner of the hall there lay a truss or two of straw, which had been brought there to make up some packages: so Alice seated her father on a chair, while she hastily opened the trusses and shook them into a kind of bed, upon which she helped to place her father. "And now," said she, as soon as she saw him extended on the straw, "what am I to do next? If you do not get us all into trouble with your worthless tricks, I am greatly mistaken. I always said it would be so. Why your coat is all bloody! Must I fetch the doctor?"

"No," said the poor man, groaning deeply, "beware how you do that: but do run, for heaven's sake run to John Rowe, and call him hither."

"What, to doctor you?" said Alice.

"Yes, to set my arm; for it is broken: but say not a word to any other person, or I may come to be hanged."

"O," said Alice, "I thought how it was—though it is no more than I expected." So saying, she fetched her father a dram from a bottle which always stood ready; and then locking the door, she ran for John Rowe, a person who had some little skill in surgery, and who being considered as sufficiently trusty in any bad cause, was employed without fear on such occasions as these.

Alice did not return with the doctor, as she called him, till three hours or more had passed away. The poor wretch's arm was then set, though in a blundering kind of manner, after some of the shot had been extracted. Upon which another dram being administered, the patient was left on his straw in a state of suffering which soon brought on a violent fever; while Alice entertained the doctor with brandy and tea at the other end of the hall.

At this moment Marten Taylor, who had stopped to sleep at a small inn on the road, arrived at his father's door, where he knocked for some time without receiving any answer. For although those within heard him plainly enough, yet not wishing that any stranger should see the father on the straw, or the doctor in waiting, no notice was taken of the matter. Wherefore Marten, having knocked till he was tired, went round the house, and climbing a part of the garden-wall which was broken down, and had been so as long as he could remember, he got into the house by a private door with which few were acquainted. Having still many long passages to

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pass through before he came to the great hall, as he advanced cautiously along them, he thought he heard voices near the inner door of the hall. Stopping therefore for a moment, he distinctly heard his sister talking and laughing with the quack doctor. Upon which, being equally surprised and hurt, he suddenly walked in and presented himself before them. His sister reddened violently, and jumping up, said, "Surely it is not you, Marten?"

"It is," replied Marten; "and I have been knocking for a long time at the front door. Why would you not open it? Are you doing any thing you are ashamed of?" On this he looked at the doctor with an angry expression. The old man rose, but did not speak. "And where is my father?" said Marten.

Alice was confused, and blundered out something of his having met with an accident.

There is something in true and consistent piety, when attended with self-possession, which few vicious persons can stand against. Marten, without intending it, intimidated both his sister and the stranger, who both seemed unwilling to point out to him where they had left the wounded man. Marten repeated the question—"Where is my father?" And at the same time glancing his eye round the room, he started on beholding a bed of straw, with the figure of a man stretched upon it—"Is that," said he, "our father's bed, Alice? and do you leave him to die, like a dog, upon that bundle of straw?"

Old Taylor, who had just recognised his son, and was feebly calling to him from his obscure bed, started at the last words which Marten uttered; for he instantly recollected that he was lying on the very spot where the poor hound which he had so unmercifully used had breathed his last, without the comfort of straw, or even of one drop of water. This thought extorted from him a deep groan, and caused him to writhe with mental anguish. The same idea of retribution which had so forcibly struck the father was instantaneously communicated to the iron heart of Alice, and she shuddered at the thought of what her future fate might be, should she ever live to have children and to become dependant on them. She stood speechless before her brother, while in a strain of high and virtuous feeling he asked how she had dared to lay her father on so despicable a bed? But when he found that she could give him no

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satisfaction on the subject, going up to his father, and gently pressing his feverish hand, he assured him that he was come to give up the remainder of his life to his service.

"Son of my heart!" returned the old man, bursting into an agony of tears, "this is more than I deserve; I am not worthy of such a son. Go, my son, go to thy truest father and friend, and leave me to die on this straw—yes, leave me to perish like the dog which I once barbarously suffered to pine away and die on this very spot."

"No, my father, no," said Marten, "that must not be. Though not a sparrow falleth to the ground without the knowledge of its Maker, and though he assuredly approves not of cruelty to the smallest insect; yet we are told that one human creature is of greater value than many sparrows. How unreasonable, then, should I be, if I could for a moment allow the ease and comfort of my dog to come in competition with those of my father, to whom I am under the most sacred obligations of duty and regard! No, my father, be assured that I will leave you no more; but will administer, as far as I am able, to all your bodily wants; and if you will permit me, I will lead you into that way of holiness and happiness to which, through the divine permission, I myself have been introduced by my best friend and beloved master, Mr. Hartley."

The old man, though in great pain, and by this time in a high fever, seemed evidently much relieved in mind by the presence of his son; submitting, without a word, to every arrangement which the affectionate youth thought proper to propose.

Marten first directed his sister to prepare a bed in an inner room, whither he removed his father, with the assistance of the doctor; after which he despatched his sister to the next town to procure a certain medicine which he knew to be proper in cases of fever. He also forbade any drams to be administered, and even went so far as to say that Alice should not see her father but in his presence.

It was the afternoon before Alice returned with the medicine. She found her brother walking up and down the hall in deep thought. He had left his father asleep. Marten inquired of Alice whether she had any food in the house, of which he might take a little. Upon which

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she set some cold meat on the table. Marten then sat down, and seeing that his sister was not inclined to take her place with him, "Alice," he said, "are you not hungry?"

"No," said she, "I want nothing."

"Sister," said Marten, rising, "you do not love me Why do you treat me with so much coldness and distance?"

"How should I do otherwise when you take upon you at this rate?" she replied.

"You will find me an affectionate brother if you wish it, Alice," said Marten; "but I must speak the truth. I was not pleased to find my father stretched upon straw, while you were laughing and carousing with that stranger."

"And so, out of spite, you rubbed up the story of the old hound," said she.

"I give you my word, Alice, I never thought of the hound till my father mentioned the poor creature."

Alice looked as if she did not quite believe what Marten asserted. However, thinking it perhaps as well not to carry the quarrel too far at present, she seated herself at the table beside her brother.

When they had finished their meal, Marten went to his father for the purpose of administering to him the medicine he had purchased. After which, finding him composed, he took occasion to address him on the subject of religion, and to press upon him the importance of his soul's welfare above that of all earthly concerns.

The father groaned, and shaking his head, replied, "All you say, Marten, is true; I am convinced of it now—but all the worse for a miserable wretch like me. It is too late for me to think of repenting—I have made up my mind to the worst that can befall me."

Marten shuddered at this expression, and took his poor father very tenderly by the hand. "Nay, my father," said he, "why do you say there is no hope left for you? Whom did our Lord come to save? Not the faultless and the pure, but sinners of every description. Were we not sinners, we should not be fit objects of divine grace. The very word which is used to point out the way in which we are to be saved, proves also that salvation is to be considered as a free gift, and not as the reward of any merit that can be found in man: 'For by grace are we saved through faith; and that not

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of ourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.'" Ephesians ii. 8, 9.

While this conversation was passing between Marten and his father, the sun had gone down, and the shades of evening were coming on apace. Still they continued together, both of them being deeply interested in the discourse, when suddenly the silence of the house was interrupted by many rough voices and heavy footsteps, as of men carrying heavy burdens.

Marten started, and rushing out into the hall he saw a company of smugglers passing through it with their contraband goods, which they were conveying towards those secret parts of the house with which they were well acquainted. The last of them was gone out of the hall before Marten, who had entered at another end of it, could resolve what to do. He had, however, time enough, while they were stowing their goods below, to make up his mind: but lest he should be guilty of any rashness on such an occasion, he resolved to apply for the divine guidance and assistance. And for this purpose, as the outer door had been well fastened by the contraband dealers when they came in, he withdrew to the same closet in which he formerly used to spend many hours in reading and praying, in those days when he had no other friend or companion than poor Echo.

In order to reach this closet he had a long gallery to pass through, which was now nearly dark. In this gallery he had often played with his brothers, when they were children. Where were those brothers now? What had driven them from their father's house? And by what means had he been made, in any respect, to differ from those with whom he had spent his earliest years? —Marten asked and answered all these questions as he walked along the gallery. Then entering the closet at the end of the gallery, he spent there a considerable time in prayer and meditation; after which, feeling himself strengthened and encouraged, he returned to the hall. By this time the hall was lighted up with three or four candles and a blazing fire; while the smugglers were enjoying themselves at the oak dresser, which Alice had covered with such things as the house afforded; she being busily employed at the moment of her brother's entrance, in reaching some pewter-mugs from a shelf in a distant part of the hall.

Marten entered unobserved, and walking up to the

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table, addressed himself to an old man whom he had known from a child, and whom the smugglers called captain, saying, "Captain, I am somewhat surprised to see you here."

"What, Marten Taylor!" said the captain, jumping up, and offering his hand; "how are you, my boy?"

Marten gave him his hand, but said, "Gentlemen, when you understand me better, I fear you will not be so forward to offer me the right-hand of fellowship."

"Why, what now, Marten," said the captain, "what now, my old boy? Come, sit you down, and let us here renew our old friendship. We are very sorry we cannot have your poor father with us to-night."

Marten looked very grave, and changed colour from red to pale several times. At length he spoke, while all the company fixed their eyes upon him. He stated, in as short and simple terms as possible, that he was now, he trusted, a Christian, not merely in name, but in sincerity and truth; and that as such it was inconsistent with his principles to give countenance to any kind of dealings not sanctioned by the laws of his country.

On this, several of the company began to mutter curses. But Marten, taking no notice of this, added, "I therefore, though sorry to trouble and distress you, consider it my duty to inform you, my old acquaintance, that this house will from henceforward be no place of safety for you."

The hall was now filled with the oaths and execrations of the whole band of smugglers; insomuch that Marten's voice could not be heard for a few minutes. After a while, however, the whole company was silent again, every one impatiently waiting to hear what more he had to say.

Marten then calmly proceeded to state, that from his own experience and that of his connections, as well as from the assertions of holy writ, he had been deeply convinced that the most upright dealings were those alone upon which any reasonable dependance could be placed for the prosperity of families or the happiness of individuals. "And well, my old companions," he added, "well do we all know, that in the world to come our irrevocable lot will be regulated by the character and conversation we have maintained in this."

On hearing these words, such a torrent of blasphemy, profaneness, and ridicule burst from the smugglers, as

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would have rendered it impossible for any one, not under the influence of grace, to maintain his ground against them.

Marten was not, however, in the least abashed, though he walked from the table to the other end of the hall.

The smugglers then began to whisper with each other and with the captain; after which, the captain rising, said, "So I suppose the upshot of all this is, that you mean to betray us to government; expecting in the meanwhile that we should be quiet, and take it all for a good joke!"

Marten then came forward and made answer to the captain, with great steadiness and composure—"No, I mean not to give information against any of you. Had that been my intention, I should certainly not have forewarned you of it; putting myself at the same time into your power, unarmed and alone."

"There is something in that," said the captain, looking earnestly at a few of the most unruly of his people, who were even then meditating how they might most effectually restrain Marten's menacing tongue.

"I solemnly assure you," said Marten, "that I mean you no mischief. Many of you," added he, approaching them nearer, "have I known from a child. Often have I set on your knee," continued he, looking at the captain, "and been amused by the tales which you have told me of your perils at sea, and your wonderful escapes. From my heart I wish you all well, and should rejoice to see you exchanging this perilous line of business for pursuits of a more safe and honourable nature. Remember the words of the wise man, that goods unjustly gotten can never profit in the days of affliction. But what I should more especially rejoice in would be to see you choosing that narrow way which leadeth to everlasting life."

Here one or two of the smugglers could not forbear expressing their resolution to silence him in a sure and summary way; and this they did in so audible a manner that Marten, who could no longer pretend not to hear them, thought it necessary to intimate that they could not take a surer method of ruining themselves than by committing an act of that kind. "Because," continued he, "I am well known in many gentlemen's families; and were I to be missing, there are several who would

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not rest till they had traced the matter to the bottom. But," added he, "let us perfectly understand one another. The true state of the case is this: I cannot conscientiously shelter you or your proceedings in this house. But since you have long placed an unbounded confidence in this family, I solemnly promise you that I will not betray any transactions which are past, and that I will allow you a reasonable time for the removal of your goods. This is my resolution," said Marten; "and if any ill come of it to my temporal concerns, I shall still have the satisfaction of knowing that I have done that which I believed to be my duty."

Were I to repeat all that passed between Marten Taylor and the smugglers on this occasion, the relation would become tedious. Suffice it to say, that after much arguing on both sides, with many hard words and threatening expressions on the part of the smugglers, they consented to remove their goods; Marten promising them that, with regard to all that was past, he would preserve an inviolable silence.

In this manner a great part of the night was consumed.

After this violent dispute, many of the smugglers fell asleep. Marten, however, did not dare to close his eyes; but kept on his guard all the night, walking up and down the hall in solemn prayer and meditation.

Before daybreak the smugglers thought it advisable to withdraw; when Marten, having fastened the doors, withdrew into his father's room, in order to take a little repose.

PART IV.

Marten was not without some little fear, for a considerable time after this affair, lest the smugglers should encourage each other to revenge themselves upon him in some bloody way. But his fears were not productive of any tormenting solicitude, inasmuch as they were accompanied with a consciousness that he had acted with the strictest propriety on the late trying occasion. He placed his cause in the hands of the Supreme Ruler

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of the world; and, humbly confiding in his providential care, he was gradually delivered from all painful apprehension.

In a short time the smugglers had removed all their goods; and thus Marten was made the favoured instrument of withdrawing his family from one of those evil connections which had caused the ruin of several individual members of it. But still he had much to try him. His father continued to suffer greatly with his shattered arm; neither was it judged advisable to call in a doctor who knew how to dress it properly: and it soon became evident to Marten that his sister was in a very unpromising state of mind.

In the mean time, young Webb and his sister Dolly had been from home, leaving the business of the house to the management of an old servant of their father's: and when they at length returned, Marten was not long in discovering the attachment between his sister and the young man; nor could he observe it without sorrow, since young Webb appeared to him to be an utterly worthless character. Marten also found considerable difficulty in managing his father's business; and though he took directions from him every day, he was sometimes totally at a loss how to act. For the sake, however, of his afflicted parent, he resolved to exert himself to the uttermost; and having a very good character with the ranger of the forest, who had witnessed his upright conduct in many little matters, his lord was soon persuaded to overlook his inexperience, considering that every day would serve in some degree to remedy that deficiency.

Marten soon perceived that his father's situation as forest-keeper was really a very desirable place, and such a one as promised, in the hands of an upright, careful man, to maintain a family in a very creditable manner. He saw also that in the open and orderly exercise of this business, there was no cause for cruelty: since although hares and deer were occasionally to be killed, yet there were ways of executing this unpleasant work in a humane and speedy manner.

Poor James Taylor had now lingered several months in a state of almost total confinement, and there was very little hope of his ever being restored to health. Upon which the ranger, who had long suspected him of dishonest practices, was glad of the opportunity of taking

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the situation from him, and giving it to his son: so that Marten became the real master of the house during the latter part of his father's life.

Poor James Taylor did not, however, continue long after this change had taken place. The pain of his broken limb had been so exquisite and incessant as gradually to wear away his constitution: and he died, at length, in the arms of his beloved Marten, blessing him for all his kindness; but above all for the infinite labour he had taken to bring him in the days of his affliction to the knowledge of an all-sufficient Saviour—by which expression it appeared that the affectionate solicitude of his son had not been altogether in vain.

Marten Taylor had scarcely had time to put his poor father decently into the ground, before he found new troubles arising from his near neighbours, the Webbs, who, on one account or other, were almost constantly in his house. Young Webb and Alice Taylor were perpetually together; and it was easy to perceive that Dolly Webb, who was some years older than young Taylor, was exceedingly solicitous to cultivate a familiar intimacy with him. But although Dolly was a handsome girl, and could make herself very agreeable, Marten had known too much of the family to entertain any such desire on his part; and he had often reason to account himself particularly happy in being able to withstand the enticements of this young woman.

After his poor father's death, Marten made many convenient alterations in his house and gardens. His landlord was prevailed with to make several repairs in the house and premises, and he employed a labourer to assist him in digging and planting the garden. His father had formed a cock-pit near the house, as I have before said, and had in training the finest breed of fighting-cocks in all that neighbourhood. Marten filled up the cock-pit; and, fearing that if he sold the young cocks alive they might fall into the hands of cock-fighters, he had them all killed, and plucked, and sent to the poulterers, to fetch what they would.

On this occasion he had no little contention with his sister, who called him a fool for preferring the peace of the brute creation to his own interest and pleasure. Marten took this opportunity to assure his sister that, since it had pleased the Almighty to give him any just sense of religion, he had found it as impossible to take

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any delight in putting the inferior creatures to pain, as in burning his own flesh, or in putting his body to any other kind of torture. "On the contrary," said he, "when it becomes necessary for me to put any animal to death, that necessity never fails to excite in me a most uneasy sensation, and prompts me to do it in as speedy a manner as possible."

"I suppose, then," said Alice, "that you take great credit to yourself for being thus chicken-hearted, and that you consider it as something sufficiently meritorious to fit you for heaven."

"Sister," replied Marten, "I do not consider this or any other thing which I am capable of *feeling* or *doing*, as in any way meritorious, or in any degree likely to secure my admission into heaven, should it please God to appoint me an entrance into that blessed place. But this I would say, that if any man pretending to be a Christian should at the same time take pleasure in any species of cruelty, such a man most assuredly deceives himself, and his religion is vain."

Marten then went on to say something concerning the work of the Spirit in changing the heart; and especially in producing those feelings of love and tenderness which, though inferior in degree, must needs bear some just resemblance to the very feelings of the Creator towards his creatures.

He would have proceeded to speak of that most glorious and unexampled proof of divine love, the salvation of man by Jesus Christ; but Alice, who had heard him for a long time with impatience, now suddenly interrupted him with some profane remark, and walked out of the hall.

Notwithstanding the many ill conditions of his sister Alice, Marten contrived to wear out two years in her company. Though her behaviour very often rendered him extremely uncomfortable, yet he thought it his duty to bear with her as long as he could. But about the end of the second year, young Webb, being afraid of detection in some poaching or smuggling business, withdrew from the place, and enlisted in a marching regiment then lying on the coast; whither Alice almost immediately followed him, and shortly afterward became his wife. At the same time, Webb's house and situation being given to another person, Dolly Webb found it necessary to leave the country in pursuit of

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some service, having no longer any hope of connecting herself with Marten.

When all Webb's family and his sister were gone, Marten could not but feel himself in a very deserted and solitary situation. He remembered the time when his brothers and sister, with the two young Webbs, used to play together before his father's door, while the old people looked on. But now, where were all these? Not one of them was left. On these occasions the words of the psalmist were brought to the recollection of Marten —"I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree: yet he passed away, and lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found." Psalm xxxvii. 35, 36.

At some seasons Marten felt so uncomfortable in his wide house by himself, as to meditate an entire removal from it; but at other times he would say to himself— "this situation is in itself a good one for a poor man like me; and if I should ever marry, it would afford a comfortable subsistence for my family." Marten then began to consider that, in his circumstances, a proper wife would be a great comfort to him; but he had never yet seen the woman with whom he thought he could be happy.

It was now as much as four years since Marten had left his master; and during all that time he had never once seen the old gentleman, who no longer paid his usual visits in that neighbourhood: and owing to a great variety of circumstances not necessary to mention in this place, Marten had not been able to leave his home. But about this time he received a letter from Mr. Hartley, saying that he was about to pay a visit for some weeks at the house of a Mr. Jameson, who resided in Salisbury, and that he should be much pleased if Marten could take a walk over, in order to meet him there, the distance being not considerable.

Marten was much gratified on the receipt of this letter, and having engaged an old cottager in the neighbourhood, whom he believed to be an honest man, and whom he had kept in almost constant employment ever since his sister's removal, to take charge of his house and concerns during his absence, he set off with a bundle in his hand for Salisbury.

Marten had started early in the day, and having been detained about halfway by a little business, arrived at

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Salisbury about three o'clock, which, at that time, was the customary dinner hour in genteel families. As Mr. Hartley had given him very particular directions, it was no hard matter for him to find his way to Mr. Jameson's house. It stood in one of the best streets of the town. It was a new building; and the kitchen and offices, though under ground, were by no means dark or inconvenient, the area before the kitchen windows being very spacious.

Marten read the name of Jameson on the door, nearly where he had expected to find the house; and on knocking, he was received by the footman, who told him that Mr. Hartley, for whom he inquired, was then from home, but would be in at dinner. The footman, who told him that he had been directed by Mr. Hartley, if a young man called for him in his absence, to be sure to make him welcome, asked him in, showed him the kitchen-stairs, and, requesting him to walk down, promised to follow him in a few minutes, when he should have finished laying the cloth in the dining-room.

Marten walked down stairs into the kitchen, where he saw many symptoms of a good dinner nearly ready to be served up, but no appearance of cook or kitchen-maid. Hearing, however, several female voices issuing from the back-kitchen, he could not help also overhearing all that was said as distinctly as if he had been in the same room.

The persons discoursing together were Dolly the cook, Sally the housemaid, and Mrs. Biddy the lady's maid, which last-mentioned person had just gone into the back-kitchen to wash her hands, after having dressed her lady's hair with powder and pomatum, according to the fashion of those times.

"Where are the eels?" said the cook. "I shall be too late. Who, in the name of fortune, can have moved them from the place in which I left them?"

"Don't frighten yourself, cook," replied the housemaid, "I removed them! here they are!"

"What had you to do with them?" returned the first voice. "Why, I'll be hanged if you have not killed them! What was that for!"

"To prevent your skinning them alive, cook," said the housemaid. "You know I told you that I should do so by the next which came into the house, the last time we had eels for dinner; for my very heart bled to see you treat the poor creatures as you did."

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"Where's the soap?" said a third voice, which was that of the lady's maid.

"O you are wonderfully tender-hearted!" said the cook, still addressing herself to the housemaid.

"Tender-hearted!" repeated the lady's maid. "I am sure I don't understand where her tender heart is. What! to go and cut a poor creature's head off for pleasure? Is that the sign of a tender heart? I am sure, if you would give me the whole world, I could never do such a thing as to kill any animal."

"What, not to save them greater pain, Mrs. Bridget?" said the housemaid.

"No," said the lady's maid, "indeed, I could not, Sally. My feelings would not let me; and I am sure you have not the delicate nerves I have, or you never could have gone and killed all those eels, when it was no part of your business to do so."

"Well, as you have taken upon you to kill the eels, now help me to skin them, Sally, and talk no more about it," said the cook. "I suppose you are made of the same stuff as your neighbours, neither better nor worse."

When the eels were skinned, and the damsels had washed their hands, they made their appearance in the kitchen. First, the lady's maid; an ordinary looking woman, though much set off by dress: secondly, the housemaid, a pretty, neat looking young woman, of a peculiarly modest and agreeable aspect: and thirdly, the cook, who proved to be no other than Dolly Webb.

The women all seemed somewhat startled at the appearance of Marten Taylor; but more especially Dolly Webb, who nevertheless soon expressed her joy in a very loud manner. But as business then pressed, she was obliged to leave it to the lady's maid and footman to make an old acquaintance welcome.

While Marten was listening to the polite and complimentary speeches of these persons, he could not help now and then looking towards a little table at the farther end of the kitchen, at which the housemaid had sat down to her sewing, apparently paying little regard to what was passing. Marten had, from the first, been much gratified with the humane sentiments of this young woman; and this prepared him to admire the modest expression of her countenance, and the great neatness of her person. He was also pleased to observe that, happen what would in the kitchen, she still seemed intent

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on her work; and he remarked that he had seldom seen any one more diligent or expeditious with her needle.

By this time dinner was dished up; so the footman being engaged up-stairs, and the lady's maid being called away also, no one was left below but the housemaid and cook; the latter of whom bustled in and out, sometimes standing to talk a minute, and sometimes running to prepare what the footman called for. In the mean time Marten Taylor had got up from his chair, and moved near to the little table at which the housemaid sat at work; and leaning his back against the window, he ventured to put one or two questions to the young woman. As he accosted her in terms of great civility, she answered him in like manner: and Marten could not but admire the propriety with which she spoke, without boldness on the one hand, or awkward bashfulness on the other.

The conversation between Marten Taylor and this young woman did not last long: for Sally being called away by the cook, he was left alone standing near the table.

Marten, as I have before remarked, had thought for some time past that a virtuous and agreeable wife would greatly add to his happiness; and especially, as he had wherewithal to keep a family comfortably. It was natural for him, therefore, to look with an inquiring eye on every young woman whom he thought within his reach. Had Dolly Webb been a modest and pious girl, he no doubt would have chosen her; and indeed it had cost him many struggles in time past to acquire any thing like a feeling of indifference towards her. But what he had heard that day concerning the cruelty of her temper, trifling as some might have considered it, had so entirely turned his heart from her, that he could no longer think of her without disgust.

While Marten stood with his back to the window, thinking upon these subjects, his eyes wandered over the table on which Sally's work was laid; where he perceived, in the midst of the working materials, though nearly concealed by them, a book which, from its being set open, he had every reason to believe that the young woman had been consulting, and perhaps committing to memory as she worked. Marten thought that much depended upon the character of that unknown book.

"This book was not put here for me or any one to see,"

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said Marten to himself, "because it seems to have been carefully hid. If this is a light book, I will think no more of the young woman; but if it be a godly book, I should surely do well to look farther after her."

Hereupon Marten ventured, somewhat cautiously, to lift up a part of the muslin which covered the book; when he perceived it to be no other than the Bible.

The history of Marten Taylor has now run to such a length that I must endeavour to bring it to an end: otherwise, I could tell you a great deal about his meeting with his old master, to whom he broke his mind concerning the housemaid, and was encouraged to seek her as a wife by Mr. Hartley, who informed him that she had been reared in Mr. Jameson's family, and was known to be a truly pious girl.

Marten made several visits to Salisbury before he fully opened his mind to Sally; but when he did so he was favourably heard, and, after a short courtship, she became his wife.

The last account I heard of Marten, which is now as much as thirty years ago, was, that he was living happily in his house on the forest, where he was blest with three sweet babies: and, to add to his satisfaction, his old master had fitted up two rooms in his house, resolving, if Heaven should permit, there to finish his days.

Marten, though holding the office of game and forest-keeper, continued to display, among many other tokens of a truly religious feeling, a peculiar degree of tenderness towards all the dumb creatures depending on him; insomuch that he never put any animal to needless pain —thus verifying the words of holy writ, *A good man is merciful even to his beast.*

Of Alice and her husband, of Marten's brothers, and Dolly Webb, I never could get any tidings.

END OF THE YOUNG FORESTER.

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THE

BITTER SWEET.

PART I.

A CERTAIN venerable man who had for many years ministered in holy things to a small congregation of serious Christians in the city of London, one day received a letter requesting his attendance in an obscure court at the west end of the town. This letter was addressed to him by a distant relation, of whom he had some remembrance in his native village, which was at least two hundred miles from the capital.

He had heard of the marriage of this cousin many years since, but from that time had totally lost sight of her: insomuch that when he read the signature of the letter, viz. "Your affectionate cousin, Mary Bennet," he was for some moments at a loss to recollect who this Mary Bennet might be. Having, however, ascertained this point, he failed not to obey the call, hoping that some good of a spiritual nature might be the consequence of this visit; and accordingly, one foggy evening in the month of November, the good old gentleman set out, with his staff in his hand, and his Bible in his pocket, to answer the summons of his cousin.

After having traversed nearly one-third of the great city, and passed through many long streets and noble squares at the west end of the town, in pursuance of his cousin's directions, he entered into a little narrow and dark court, where he knocked at the door of a house, which would have been sufficiently large and commodious, could its inhabitants have enjoyed without diminution the pure air of heaven, and the unclouded splendour of the light of day. Having rung and knocked some minutes at this door, it was at length opened by a servant-maid, whose dusky garments and sooty complexion were ill assorted with a pair of large gilt ear-rings, to-

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gether with a lace cap and pink ribands, both however a little the worse for the smoky atmosphere in which the wearer of them commonly resided.

As soon as the old gentleman had announced his name, to wit, Henry Goodman, the door, which the damsel had hitherto held nearly closed, was immediately opened wide, with this courteous expression, "Please to walk in, sir; mistress is at home." Mr. Goodman was led through a narrow and greasy-looking passage into a parlour, where his cousin Mrs. Bennet was evidently seated in expectation of his visit. The walls of this parlour were covered with what some time past had been a white wainscot in panels, but which was now become yellow, and in some places nearly black; over the two windows were dirty white curtains, hanging in scanty festoons over gilt curtain-rods, which seemed nearly as much out of place as the glittering ear-rings of the waiting-maid; between the windows was a cracked mirror, under which stood a Grecian couch, with gilt feet and faded cover; over the chimney-piece was some old portrait with a shattered frame; and on the mantel-shelf a number of painted flower-pots filled with faded artificial flowers: the rest of the furniture was of a piece with those articles which first met the eye of Mr. Goodman, being curiously compounded of the magnificent and the mean, and indicating but too plainly the taste of their owner, who was no doubt still sighing for the glories of this passing world in a situation in which every circumstance ought to have admonished her, that nothing remained to be done but to renounce these vanities, and to look for a more enduring inheritance. The figure of Mrs. Bennet herself, as she rose to meet her cousin, was even more striking than the arrangements of her parlour. She had been a handsome woman, and had once prided herself on this circumstance; neither did she yet seem aware that all pretensions of this kind were wholly passed away, if a judgment might be formed from the style of her dress; for she wore a turban and a flaxen wig, from beneath which last a few gray hairs having escaped, would have told the melancholy tale that she was no longer young, although many wrinkles in a sallow face, and the loss of many teeth, had not borne their witness to the same unhappy truth.

The first salutation of the two cousins was kind on

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either side, although it was but too evident that it was impossible perhaps to find a worse matched pair.

The conversation between Mr. Goodman and Mrs. Bennet, while the maid was attending at the tea-table, was such as takes place in every ordinary case in which old friends meet after a long absence. Mrs. Bennet asked Mr. Goodman if he were a married man; and being told that he had always lived single, she remarked that he was so far happy, as none knew trouble till they were exercised with the cares of a family. It was in vain for the good old gentleman to say that he believed that happiness was pretty equally allotted to all states and conditions of life, where obedience to the divine will was the leading principle. Mrs. Bennet was incapable of admitting this sentiment, and therefore turned off the subject by asking him if his tea was agreeable? uttering at the same time something between a groan and a sigh, and adding an expressive glance, by which she meant to indicate that nothing of the world, or of the state of man in it, could possibly be understood by old bachelors or parsons, under which last term she included not only every preacher of the Gospel in past and present days, but every priest of every species and denomination, not even with the exception of Aaron himself.

Mr. Goodman saw this glance, though he took no notice of it: but when the tea-things were removed, he requested his cousin to give him some account of those troubles to which she had alluded in the presence of the servant.

"Ah! cousin Goodman," she said, "it was partly for that very purpose I sent for you, added to the pleasure I hoped to have in seeing an old friend: indeed it was but by chance I learned that you were living in town: and a poor forlorn and childless widow, such as I am, is apt, you know, to look out for old friends. It is some comfort to a broken heart, cousin, occasionally to unburden itself; and to whom can one speak so confidently as to a person one has known from a child? Ah! Henry Goodman! those were blessed days when I knew you; when we used to meet and dance at Christmas, and play at blindman's-buff, and hot cockles. Those were happy days indeed. We had no cares then, no troubles, no sorrows."

In this part of her conversation she paused a moment,

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and wiped her eyes, in which some tears had appeared; and Mr. Goodman took this occasion to remark, that he could by no means account the earliest periods of his life either as the most happy or the most free from care. "For in youth," added the old gentleman, "I had many desires to satisfy, many anxieties about future things, from which, I thank God, I have long been set free. Believe me, my cousin, there are none, young or old, rich or poor, who ever enjoy peace till they have been brought to cast their cares on God, and have ceased to be anxious for themselves, otherwise than how their spiritual good may be advanced."

Mrs. Bennet, on hearing these words, lowered her pocket-handkerchief, and looking full in her cousin's face, said, "Bless me, Henry Goodman! how strangely you talk! Surely you don't deny that youth is the season of happiness? and almost the only season in which it can be enjoyed? I never heard this disputed before."

"We will talk of this another time," said Mr. Goodman. "I am now impatient to hear your story. I hope that this may not be our last meeting, since it is the first we have had for many years. You must now, then, satisfy my curiosity respecting your past life."

"True, cousin Henry," said Mrs. Bennet; and then fetching another sigh, she began her story:—"I think, Henry," she said, "you had left our country when I was first addressed by Mr. Hill; I mean young Squire Hill of the Red House. You remember the Red House. It was the best house in the parish, having two handsome wings, and the best stables in the parish. The squire and I first became acquainted in the bowling-green house, where we met to dance once a month in the summer time. It was thought an excellent match for me, and it was the country's talk for a twelvemonth: but at the end of that time he broke off with me, and there was the beginning of my misfortunes; then I first knew trouble. Now in the midst of my affliction, Mr. Bennet came down into the country, and I was so foolish as to let him persuade me to accept him, though he was but the gentleman of my Lord W——, on whose estate you remember my father lived. This was no match, you know, for me; though my father, poor good old man, said it was more suitable for one in my station than that which had been proposed by the squire."

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Perhaps," said Mr. Goodman, "your father objected to Mr. Hill's character."

"How could that be?" said Mrs. Bennet. "Mr. Hill was a very respectable gentleman, and never suffered a tradesman to want his money, though he was somewhat given to the bottle. But what of that? he has reared his family in great gentility; and before I left my lady's, that is some twelve years ago, Mrs. Hill came in her own carriage to our house, and I heard the footman say she was as well dressed as any lady in the land, let the other be who she would."

When two persons are met together who have not one opinion in common, there is nothing more difficult than to keep up a conversation. In such a case there will either be endless disputes between them, or one must be quite silent. And, in the present instance, Mr. Goodman resolved that he would hear the good lady's story out without farther interruption, or at least with very few comments, patiently waiting a suitable opportunity for speaking his own mind. In consequence, without answering her last remark, or endeavouring to prove that Mrs. Hill might be well dressed, and visit my lady in her own carriage, though her husband was a very bad man—he contented himself by saying, "And so, cousin, you took up with Mr. Bennet, and I suppose came to town with him."

"Yes, Henry Goodman, I did," she replied; "where my husband got me the place of my lady's maid; and after a while, when the old housekeeper died, I became housekeeper; after which my husband and I had the command of the housekeeper's room, and the management of all the under servants."

"And your husband was kind to you?" said Mr. Goodman.

"Why, what reason had he to be otherwise," replied Mrs. Bennet, looking with astonishment at Mr. Goodman, "when I, who might have been Squire Hill's lady, had condescended to marry him?"

"But I thought," said Mr. Goodman, "that you told me the squire had cast you off."

Mrs. Bennet, perhaps, did not hear this last remark of her cousin; for she certainly took no notice of it, and went on with her story.—"My husband and I," she added, "never had but one child. This was a daughter, who was born some years after I became housekeeper.

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We called her Rachel; and she was a sweet child, a very pretty child. And I think, cousin Goodman, that with the good education I procured her, and the money which at one time we thought we could have given her, I might expect that she would marry well. But oh! Henry Goodman! I was born to be unfortunate, and to meet with nothing but troubles! Of this, however, more hereafter.

"My lady was so considerate as to let me keep Rachel with me till she was as much as seven years old, when she was so kind as to assist me in putting her to school; so I accordingly placed her in a very genteel school at Kensington, where she learned a great many pretty accomplishments, I assure you, so that she was much noticed, even by the nobility, when she came home for the holydays. Nay, she was introduced into my lady's dressing-room, and helped her to embroider her best drawing-room chairs, besides several filigree urns and peaches, which stand on the dressing-room chimney-piece at the country seat to this day, as I was told a few months since. You will not therefore wonder, cousin, if I had my expectations for Rachel, hoping one day or other that she might be advanced to ride in her own carriage; and more than this, that I myself should see it; yes, and I might have seen it, had it not been her own fault. But you, cousin, you are a happy man. You know not what it is to rear children to break their parents' hearts." Here the poor woman ceased for a moment to speak, and burst into tears, while Mr. Goodman, who had heard her call herself childless, prepared himself to hear some dreadful end to the history of this pretty young creature, thus reared in the ways of vanity. Under these apprehensions, however, not knowing how to address her, he remained silent, till Mrs. Bennet being somewhat recovered, took up again the thread of her history.

"When Rachel was about sixteen," continued she, "my lord died, and my lady followed him a few months afterward. Upon which, my husband having, through my diligence chiefly, saved a pretty property, we took the Rose Coffee-House in one of the new streets which were then building, and soon got into a very genteel line of business, and should, no doubt, have shortly realized something very handsome for Rachel, had not my ill-fortune again pursued me: for indeed, my good

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cousin Henry, from first to last, my whole life has been but one continued scene of trouble, misfortune succeeding misfortune, till I am now reduced to what you see—a poor desolate and disconsolate widow, living in this miserable court, in which I should have scorned to set my foot in better days, and obliged to let my first floor to a lodger, by way of enabling me to pay my butcher's and baker's bill." Here again flowed another flood of tears; after which the unhappy woman proceeded:—

"We remained at the Rose Coffee-House as much as five years; and during that time, one or two of those who frequented our house seemed much taken with Rachel, though of course I was very careful that she should be seldom seen; well considering that by making her too cheap in the eyes of every comer, I should be marring her prospects of a good settlement. And I am sure, my good cousin, you will agree with me that I herein acted but the proper part of a careful mother and a prudent woman." So saying she paused and looked hard at Mr. Goodman, who could have said much on the occasion, though he only bowed, and begged her to proceed, having resolved to say little till she should have finished her story.

"But among all those who seemed to favour Rachel," continued Mrs. Bennet, "there was only one whom we could approve, and indeed who went so far as to put the question to her: and this was a young gentleman just come into possession of a very pretty estate in Essex, and who was withal very genteel and agreeable. This young gentleman, whose name was Featherston, always attended our billiard-room; for we kept a billiard-table, which, together with some dealings my husband had with a lottery-office, brought us in a very pretty income. So the affair between Rachel and Mr. Featherston went on very well, for the poor girl certainly liked him, when things took such a turn as I could never even have dreamed of.

"About this time, that is, when Rachel was just twenty-one, and all affairs in a fair train for her marriage, a new chapel in the next street was occupied by a preacher who made all the neighbourhood ring with his new-fangled doctrines; some called him an evangelical preacher, and others a Methodist; but call him what you please, he was a setter forth of gloomy and dark opinions, and many who heard him were strangely

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affected by his preaching. This preacher was much spoken of in our public room before my husband was tempted to go to hear him; but one Sunday evening he came into the parlour with his hat in his hand, and calling Rachel, he asked her if she would accompany him to the chapel.

"'Why surely,' I said, 'you are not going there?'

"'I am, indeed,' he replied. 'I have heard so much for and against this new preacher, that I am determined to hear for myself.'

"My mind did not misgive me at the time," continued Mrs. Bennet. "I had no manner of dread of what was to follow from this whim of my husband's: on the contrary, I laughed, and said, 'Well, Francis, what are we to think of this? Fine times indeed, when Frank Bennet becomes a church-goer.' For do you know that, although I was always myself particularly mindful of my religious duties, and do not know that I ever in my life missed going to church on a Christmas-day, or Easter Sunday, or that I ever ate so much as the wing of a fowl on Good Friday, yet I never could persuade my husband to go to church, excepting when we were at my lord's seat in the country, and then he was forced to go once a day at least; for my lord's aunt was generally with the family in the country, and she always *counted* the servants from the family-pew. She used to say it appeared well in the eyes of the neighbouring families, to see the servants'-pew quite full. It looked creditable, she affirmed. It looked as if my lord kept a full establishment; and that the servants were respectable and well-dressed persons. And I am sure you will agree with Lady Di—— in this particular," added Mrs. Bennet, again appealing to Mr. Goodman.

It was impossible that Mr. Goodman could express any acquiescence in these sentiments of Lady Di——; he therefore only shook his head, and said, "But, cousin, you are flying from your point. So your husband and daughter went to hear the new minister?"

"They did," replied Mrs. Bennet. "But as the house was very full when they came home, and as we were very busy all the next week, I forgot to ask them about the preacher; and, in truth, thought no more of the matter till the next Sunday, when I missed them in the evening, and found that they were again gone to the chapel. Well, you may be sure I did not let this pass

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as it had done the Sunday before; but when they came in, I spoke my mind pretty plainly, and asked them what they could propose to themselves by running after this new preacher, who was allowed by all the neighbourhood to be little better than a common Methodist?

"My daughter made me no answer whatever, but sat down in a dark corner of the parlour, and, as I thought, appeared to be weeping. My husband, however, replied, and said a great deal very little to the purpose, about having heard what he had never heard before, but what he should never rest till he had become better acquainted with. 'O Mary, Mary,' he said (for I can never forget his words, since this was the very first indication I ever had of that derangement of his faculties which from thenceforward became more and more evident to every one), 'we have souls which may be lost—for ever lost; and yet we devote our whole time to the care of these perishing bodies, without once considering our immortal part.'"

"And where," said Mr. Goodman, unable to repress his feelings on this occasion, "where, my cousin, was the madness in all this?"

"O you shall hear presently," said Mrs. Bennet, with an air in which the most perfect confidence in her own judgment and opinions was chiefly remarkable. "Being astonished, as you may suppose, at the words, and still more at the manner of my husband, I said, 'And pray, Frank Bennet, if you are to turn Methodist, what is to come of our business?'

"'Ah!' replied he, with a deep sigh, 'that is the question. Our coffee-house—our billiard-room—my lottery concerns!' So saying, he sighed again, and walked to the window, where he put his handkerchief to his eyes.

"You may be sure I was not a little provoked, and turning to Rachel, I asked her what she had been hearing at church?—'Has the parson been preaching at your father, child?' said I.

"I never shall forget her answer. On being thus spoken to she got up, and coming forward to the light, I perceived that her whole face was red with weeping. 'No, mother,' she said; 'no, dear mother; the minister has not been preaching at my father, nor at any one individual of his congregation in particular, but to all of us.' And she would have gone on to tell me what had

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been the subject of the discourse; but I bade her hold her tongue, go to her room, and on peril of my eternal displeasure never set her foot within hearing of any such ranters again. She obeyed me without a word, and left the room; and I verily believe would never again have gone to the chapel, had not her father insisted upon it that his authority was higher than mine, and that she should accompany him wherever he chose. So you see, my good cousin, that the first-fruits of these strange doctrines were rebellion on the part of my daughter, and unkindness on that of my husband."

"Rebellion!" said Mr. Goodman, "how can you call it so? When the parents could not agree, how was the child to please both!"

"These, cousin, as I have said," returned Mrs. Bennet, "were the first-fruits of people pretending to be better than their neighbours; and had this been the only effect of these mighty pretensions to religion which my husband so suddenly took up, all might have been well. But you shall hear.

"From that time, Mr. Bennet, from being a cheerful, hearty, happy creature, the life of his company, the most obliging man in his own house that ever was known or seen, became the poorest, dullest creature that ever lived in the world; creeping about his own house like a ghost during the day, and groaning and sighing all the night—telling me that he was dissatisfied with his mode of life, that his calling was not an honest one, and that he wished he could bring his mind to throw all up, be content without any farther gain, and retire to some quiet place, where he might spend the remainder of his life among such as feared God—I suppose, with his Methodist friends—till he fretted me beyond any idea I can give you, and made me almost unfit to carry on the business of the house, which now lay entirely upon me. O! how did I use to talk and argue with him, particularly at night when we were alone together. But nothing I could say appeared to have the least power over him; for he was wholly deaf to reason, and perfectly bewildered with his new conceits, excepting indeed when I spoke to him of his daughter. Among other things I used to say, 'And so you would ruin Rachel, your only child, your own flesh and blood? and just at the time when she is about to make so good a match? What sort of a father must you be? And what sort of religion is that which

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sets a man against his own child?' Well, this argument had some effect, and kept him tolerably quiet, though he seemed so bent upon his new whims, and so full of the idea that his present calling was not a lawful one, that he was like a man melancholy mad, till the time approached when Rachel was to be married.

"Mr. Featherston had been some months in Paris, and his return was immediately expected, at which period he was to receive the hand of our daughter, when she was to go down with him to his seat in Essex in her new carriage; for Mr. Featherston had ordered the carriage in Long-Acre before he went abroad.

"And now," continued Mrs. Bennet, "I am come to the most trying period of my life, though mine has been throughout a life of trial,—a life of disappointment. I knew that Rachel loved Mr. Featherston. I had seen her shed tears over his letters. I knew she wore his picture fastened round her neck. I could see that she always changed colour at the mention of his name. And I had heard her say, that he was the only man for whom she had ever felt the smallest preference. And yet, would you believe it, cousin Henry, when he came to claim her promise to become his wife, she actually flew off, on account of I don't know what, but I believe his religion, and his being a billiard player, and attending the theatres, and other such matters."

"Excellent! excellent!" exclaimed Mr. Goodman, no longer able to contain himself, and striking his foot on the ground in a manner which made the old lady start. But instantly checking himself, and striving to look more as he thought his cousin would wish him to look on this occasion, he added, "And did she stand to it, cousin?—did she keep to her resolution?"

"She did," said Mrs. Bennet, "indeed she did, cousin, as determined as ever you saw any thing in your experience, and her father upheld her in her obstinacy. But I believe the poor girl heartily repented her folly when it was too late: for after Mr. Featherston left her she never looked up again, but as it were pined away month after month, till at length she sunk into her grave, a melancholy example of the effects of these gloomy doctrines."

"Nay, but surely," said Mr. Goodman, "she did not say that she repented what she had done?"

"No," said Mrs. Bennet, "she maintained to the very

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last that she had done right. And it was only two days before she died that she wrote a very long letter to Mr. Featherston, full of the reasons for which she had refused him. She offered me a sight of the letter; but I could not read it, I was altogether so wretched about the whole business.

"Ah, my Rachel!" exclaimed the poor worldly mother in this part of her narrative; "she was a sweet girl, and was laid in her grave in all the bloom of her beauty. Cousin Goodman, cousin Goodman, you are much to be envied, because you never knew what it was to have an ungrateful child."

Mr. Goodman again felt himself strongly urged to speak his mind on this part of his cousin's story; but feeling that nothing he could say would at that moment be understood, he begged her to proceed, and tell him how her husband took this misfortune.

"Why," said she, "immediately after Rachel's funeral, he threw up all his concerns: he sold his house and furniture at great disadvantage, and caused his billiard-table to be broken up and burned; and taking a small house in Surrey, he actually, as I might say, moped himself to death with his books and his preachers: though I could never discern that he fretted much after Rachel, since he would sometimes tell me that he wished no better for me than to see me die as she had done."

"Then I suppose he thought her death a most blessed one," said Mr. Goodman.

"I don't know what he thought," replied Mrs. Bennet, "for I never had patience to hear him tell his thoughts: but this I know—he made me so unhappy, by perpetually harping on one gloomy subject or another, that it was almost a relief to me when he died; though since his becoming methodistical, he had so mismanaged his affairs that he left me with only a few hundred pounds. And thus, cousin Goodman, I, who once expected to see my daughter riding in her own carriage, am now a poor forlorn and childless widow, worn out with sorrow, and brought by fretting into so sad a state of health that I spend half my nights in pain and anguish of body, while my days are wasted in tears and lamentations. Truly may it be said, 'This is a life of sorrow, a world of bitterness.'"

Here the old lady renewed her tears: but as we fear transgressing the limits allotted to us for the com-

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pass of a single tract, we conclude in this place; and shall hope, on another occasion, to point out how this poor woman escaped the wo which she had hitherto well deserved, by calling evil good and good evil, by putting darkness for light and light for darkness, by putting bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

PART II.

In the former part of this tale I related the history which Mrs. Bennet gave of herself; by which it appears that this woman was one of those ordinary characters who, never having experienced the power of regenerating grace, could only form a judgment of things as they passed according to her own carnal conceptions, being unable to discern any spiritual good in any of those divine dispensations whereby her earthly hopes and worldly prospects had been cut down and withered. Neither, if we read Scripture aright, or consult our own experience, should we wonder at this: for it is written—"The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. viii. 7. And again—"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things." 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15.

It cannot be doubted but that all these reflections were duly made by Mr. Goodman, while constraining himself to listen in silence to his cousin's story; neither can we question but that he was exceedingly anxious how best to open her mind on those subjects concerning which she entertained such erroneous views, and that he only waited till she had said all she wished to say, before he began to turn what she had told him to some advantage in a spiritual way. Accordingly, as soon as she ceased to speak, and had given vent for some moments to her tears and sobs, he addressed her to the following purpose:—"My good cousin, you have had your troubles, and they are such indeed as are most grievous to flesh and blood; for *health*, *friends*, and *earthly prosperity* are

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indeed those things which are most sweet to the natural man. Yet the Almighty has dealt with you in a manner so tender and so full of mercy, that, amid all your bereavements, you have need of songs of praise and thanksgiving."

"Songs of praise!" repeated Mrs. Bennet, looking with indignation at Mr. Goodman; "songs of praise!"—And is this all the comfort you have to give, Henry Goodman?"

"Yes, cousin," returned Mr. Goodman, "yes, you have need of praise and thanksgiving. For were not your husband and child found of Him whom they never sought? is there not good reason to believe that they are now in glory? and is not opportunity granted you for seeking the same glory? Are you not now compelled to retire from scenes of vice and dissipation, and allowed time and leisure for repentance?" Mr. Goodman then repeated this beautiful verse—

> "Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
> But trust him for his grace;
> Behind a frowning Providence
> He hides a smiling face."

Mrs. Bennet appeared to pay no attention to the sentiments expressed in this quotation; but repeating the words "vice and dissipation," which Mr. Goodman had dropped, and taking fire at these, she asked him what reason he had to suppose that she had ever lived in vice and dissipation? "I am sure," added she, "no one had ever occasion to charge me with immoral conduct. While I lived with my lady, as I told you before, I was a very strict church-goer, particularly in the country; and though people may have talked, yet I am sure it was altogether without reason, for no one ever saw me in the smallest degree overcome with liquor or any thing of the kind."

"Far be it from me, my dear cousin," said Mr. Goodman, "to bring any particular charges against you;—I, who have neither seen you, nor even heard your name mentioned, for many years. But, surely, you cannot be ignorant that all men are sinners? and that all have come short of the glory of God?"

The answer which Mrs. Bennet made to this remark convinced Mr. Goodman that, if any good was to be done through his means to the unhappy woman, her

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understanding as well as her heart must be set right on religious subjects. Though living in a Christian country, it was very plain that she was in a state of total darkness respecting true religion; and as she seemed very unwilling to hear, he felt that he should have no easy task in making her understand even the common outlines of the Christian system. However, he resolved to make the trial, and to set before her in as few words as possible the great leading truths of our holy religion: viz. the existence and nature of the one God, the three Persons of the Holy Trinity, and the offices of these Persons in the great work of redemption. He also spoke to her of the fall of man, and the everlasting purposes of God, "whereby, before the foundations of the world were laid, he decreed by his counsel to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation." He likewise pointed out how those who were saved were justified freely in Christ; and being "called according to God's purpose by his Spirit, they through grace obey the call, and being made sons of God by adoption, be made like the image of his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ; they walk religiously in good works; and at length, by God's mercy, attain to everlasting felicity."

But when, after many repetitions and frequent requests that she would not interrupt him, he hoped he had succeeded so far as to make her understand some little of what he was aiming at, she replied, that his manner of talking was so like her poor husband's, that she could almost believe she heard him again; adding, at the same time, that these doctrines might do very well among Methodists and people of that kind, but that she, for her part, belonged to the Church of England, and would never be induced to listen to a new religion.

"Why, my dear madam," said Mr. Goodman, "I have been repeating to you the very words of the Articles of the Established Church. Lend me your Prayer-book, and I will point them out to you."

"It does not signify looking for a Prayer-book now," replied Mrs. Bennet, peevishly; "we have met together for a little talk, and not for the purpose of reading and turning over books. I have done very well till now, and I don't see why I am to be taking up new doctrines at my time of life."

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"You have done very well!" said Mr. Goodman: "why, did you not but now tell me that you had found nothing but misery in the world? You are either happy or you are not so, cousin Bennet: if you are content, why trouble me with so many complaints? and if you are unhappy in your old course, why refuse to seek a new one?—why refuse to take that way which your blessed husband and child have taken? This world, with all its pleasures, has abandoned you; your old acquaintance have forgotten you; your riches have taken wing and fled away; sickness, old age, and death, are at hand; and yet you refuse the only comfort which offers itself!"

Here the good man repeated several of the precious promises which abound in Scripture. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matt. xi. 28–30. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out." John vi. 37. "O my cousin!" added the good man, "I trust that you are one who is already given to the Lord: I consider the blessed change which took place before death in your husband and child as an earnest of good to you; and, as a minister of the Gospel, I call on you to come to your Saviour: I assure you of his readiness to receive you, and I warn you of the destruction which awaits you if you do not obey the call."

The good man was here suddenly interrupted by the entrance of a gossiping old lady, who came in to ask her neighbour if she had a mind to a game at all-fours, at the same time turning her eye towards a greasy pack of cards which Mr. Goodman had not before observed, as they were half hid by one of the painted flower-pots on the mantel-shelf.

In reply to this, Mrs. Bennet excused herself from the party at all-fours on account of her visiter, adding, at the same time, that perhaps Mr. Goodman might not object to a hand at tredille or three-handed whist.

It was in vain for Mr. Goodman to endeavour to repress a deep sigh, or rather groan, which made its escape from his breast as he heard this proposal; but without making any answer, he rose in haste from his chair, took his hat and stick, and wished the ladies a good night,

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promising to call again on his cousin in the course of a few days.

Mrs. Bennet was by no means sorry to hear the street-door shut after her cousin, for she had begun sorely to repent having sent for him, not expecting to find in him one who would deal so plainly with her. His conversation, however, had left such an impression on her mind, that, as she was dealing the cards (for she sat down to all-fours as soon as ever she believed him to be got fairly into the street), she sighed several times, complaining much of her old disorder, which was an oppression on her chest.

"You are low, Mrs. Bennet," said Mrs. Derby, the old lady above-mentioned, "you are low this afternoon. Have you taken your drops as usual? or perhaps you have been fatigued with conversation? To be sure, the gentleman who just went out looked agreeable enough; but he seemed to have a strange aversion to cards."

"He is a worthy man, I dare say," replied Mrs. Bennet, "though very odd and very particular I doubt not. But you know, Mrs. Derby, one person may be of one way of thinking, and one of another; and unless people are agreed, it is not very easy to keep up a conversation. And another thing, the sight of him, for he is a very old acquaintance, brought old troubles to my mind, and led me to the comparison of what I was in my better days, and what I might have been had all things turned out well, with what I am now; and these thoughts, you know, are very overpowering, and very oppressive to the nerves."

So saying, the old lady began to shed tears: on which Mrs. Derby, getting up, went to a cupboard in the wainscot and brought out a small glass of brandy, which she gave to her companion, saying, "Come, come, I know what you want—you have been kept too long without your drops."

The brandy being swallowed, and Mrs. Derby being persuaded to take a little herself, Mrs. Bennet soon recovered her spirits, and the two old ladies spent the remainder of the evening in their usual way.

And now it may be easily understood wherefore Mrs. Bennet was so anxious to keep her ears and heart shut against that religion which she knew could not subsist with evil habits secretly indulged. She had long been addicted to drinking strong liquors in a guarded manner,

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and he who indulges sin in secret will always feel his heart closed against God.

The next morning Mrs. Bennet told her maid, if Mr. Goodman should call to say that she was from home, and on no account ever to let him in again. And since the maid had taken as great a dislike as the mistress to this good old gentleman, whose mild and holy deportment carried with it a kind of censure on all ill-doing, he was always dismissed, whenever he came to the house, with an assurance that Mrs. Bennet had just stepped out to see a neighbour, and would not be back till very late. Mr. Goodman did not at first apprehend the nature of these excuses, and so continued his visits for some time: but at length, finding that he had only his labour for his pains, he one day bought a new Bible, and having wrapped it up in such a way as prevented its appearing to be what it really was until the parcel was opened, he left it, with his best wishes, at his cousin's door, stating that he should be ready to call upon her whenever she should signify that she wished to see him.

From that time Mr. Goodman heard no more of his cousin for two years; during which period her habits of drinking becoming more excessive, she was robbed by her servant, her lodgers left her, and she found herself reduced to the necessity of selling her furniture to pay her tradesmen's bills, and even of retiring to a little mean dwelling, where she lodged in an upper room, having no other attendant but Martha Noel, a poor woman who lived in the house, and who had served in the capacity of washerwoman to the Rose Coffee-House. One blessing, however, still attended the unhappy woman in this her most destitute state—the washerwoman, now become her nurse, was acquainted with the truth, and, though poor, was pious.

In the mean time, diseases of various kinds, inflamed and perhaps originally occasioned by intemperance, tormented, without ceasing, the miserable Mrs. Bennet, neither allowing her rest by day nor night; and, in a word, it seemed that human misery could scarcely be rendered more complete than it appeared in the case of this wretched woman when brought to this her last lodging.

And here I might fill whole volumes in describing the workings of Mrs. Bennet's mind, when she first found

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herself laid on a clean bedstead, without curtains, in a garret belonging to the house of one with whom she would have scorned in her better days, as she called them, to exchange a dozen words which were not connected with business; having no furniture about her but a couple of chairs, a deal table, and a trunk containing a few clothes, together with the only present she had ever received from her cousin, and which shame alone had prevented her from selling. The feelings of this poor creature were, at first, those only of unmingled rage and indignation; and in this first fit of resentment it is not known what blasphemies she might have uttered, had she not been checked by Martha Noel, who, as she was busied in lighting her fire in the little grate, and putting things in the best order she could, from time to time kept soothing her old mistress much to the following purpose—"Nay, dear Madam Bennet, don't take on after such a manner: be sure I will make you as comfortable as I can. This world, you know, is not our resting-place; thank God, there is a better prepared for those who love the Lord. Think of the dear saints who are gone before: think of my good master, how he gave up the world for the love of his Saviour; dear soul, he would have no more to do with unholy gains. And then that sweet Miss Rachel, did she not choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season? Ah! how did that lovely creature die! how peaceful, how happy, how triumphant was her faith!—not a murmur—not a complaint. She was indeed a blessed creature."

In this manner the old woman, still going about her work, frequently discoursed with Mrs. Bennet, and by her sincere piety awed that unhappy sufferer into silence. The integrity of this good Christian also served her in many other instances. Martha Noel had procured a doctor for Mrs. Bennet, and it was impossible for Mrs. Bennet to obtain from Martha either food or liquor, in any kind or measure, different from what the doctor had ordered. Martha was fully aware of the sinful infirmity of Mrs. Bennet with respect to ardent liquors, and she could by no means be induced to encourage her in this sin: moreover, she managed her very small income, which arose only from an annuity left her by her former lady, with such economy, that all her absolute wants were supplied, while care was taken to leave in her way

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only the Bible, and such other books as might administer to her spiritual wants.

I have before said that it would fill volumes were I to describe all that passed in the mind of Mrs. Bennet, as she lay in her garret, in the situation I have described—a prey at times to racking pains of body, and still more bitter pangs of conscience: for her conscience, which had long been deadened by the use of stupifying liquors, began to do its proper work as soon as she was compelled to the disuse of such liquors; when many things which she had heard her husband and daughter say in their illness, together with all which Mr. Goodman had urged at their last meeting, recurred to her mind, and, by the divine blessing, did not recur without a beneficial effect. As time, however, will not permit me to enter largely into these particulars, I shall simply say that, some months after Mrs. Bennet's reception into the house of Martha Noel, such a decided change took place in her whole character, that those very events and transactions of her past life which she had been accustomed to look upon as the most bitter and afflictive, she now learned to number among the most sweet and tender testimonies of that redeeming love, which had purposed her salvation ere yet the forefather of mankind had been called into existence. As divine love, connected with a sense of her own depravity, obtained the ascendency in her heart, she would often thus address her poor and lowly companion:—"Oh, Martha Noel, what a wretch have I been! How did I cling to the world! And how should I have clung thereto even until I had perished, had not the Almighty, by his salutary chastisements, compelled me to feel that what I counted my chief gain was preparing for me destruction, and that those things which afflicted the flesh and brought down my high thoughts, were appointed to be the means of bringing me into the way of salvation."

Mrs. Bennet had been nearly twelve months lying on her bed in the garret of Martha Noel's house, when she bethought herself that it was possible Mr. Goodman might now forgive her ill-treatment of him, and condescend to pay her a visit in her lowly situation: she accordingly sent to request that he would favour her with his company. It was on occasion of this visit that the following conversation took place, with which I am now about to conclude this history.

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Mrs. Bennet was lying on her bed, having on her head a clean cap of coarse Irish cloth with a narrow plaited border, her flaxen wig being laid aside, while her pale emaciated face wore the expression of deep humility. As Mr. Goodman entered, she stretched out her thin hand and said, "Cousin Goodman, can you forgive me? I have behaved very ill to you."

"No more of that, dear madam," returned the old gentleman, bowing more low to her as she lay on her humble pallet than he would have done in her handsome parlour behind the bar at the Rose Coffee-House. Mr. Goodman then took a seat which was tendered to him by Martha Noel, and taking in at one glance the whole furniture of the room, as well as the little grate, in which a bright fire was then burning, for it was cold weather, "I am glad to see, cousin," he said, "that you are so comfortable, every thing so clean and nice about you, and that you are so high and quiet above the street. I'll tell you what, cousin Bennet, I like your situation and your company twenty to one better than I did in the last place where I visited you."

"Ah! cousin Goodman," replied Mrs. Bennet, "I have reason to bless the day which brought me here. How often, how very often since I have been in this place, have I thought of the verse which you repeated to me; and Martha Noel here, my good friend and comforter, has been so kind as to procure the hymn for me." Mrs. Bennet then repeated—

> "Behind a frowning providence
> He hides a smiling face;—"

Adding, "O! Henry Goodman! wonderful are the means by which I have been brought from darkness to light, and from death to life. One of the greatest blessings perhaps I have ever enjoyed has been my sleepless nights. Cousin Goodman, I am a very bad sleeper; indeed for some years I have not known what it is to sleep the night through; but since I came here, I have constantly laid awake for hours, counting the church clock not unfrequently from eleven or twelve till four, or perhaps five. These were at first dark, heavy, wearisome hours to me, and I would have given the world for a light, or a book, or something to pass away the time. But it was not for me to waste money for lights to burn in the night, so I was compelled to take my own

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thoughts for my companions: and O, what torment did these thoughts inflict at one time, taking their colour as they did from the pain and anguish of my body, and giving me, as it were, a foretaste of the miseries of eternal death; till I was forced in very grief of heart to cry out, 'Ah! whither shall I fly for help!' And then, my good nurse here, being at hand in the morning to direct me where to apply, and whose merits to plead in my own behalf, seeing I had none of my own, I was drawn, by the divine blessing on my weary nights, to call on the Saviour, and cling, as it were, to his cross, before I well knew where I was. This has led me to think what a blessing it is to the sick, particularly to sinful wretches such as myself, to be kept awake in the dead and still hours of night. In the day we have always one little thing or other to divert our thoughts; but when all is silent, and still, and dark around us, at such a season the emptiness of all worldly pursuits is likely to be rendered more manifest, while death and the invisible world are apt to make a stronger impression upon the mind."

"Well," said Mr. Goodman, "I am glad, my good cousin, that you have been able to bring your waking hours during the night to some advantage, and to render them so beneficial to your soul. This is a comfortable hearing to your friends; and in this place you have no doubt enjoyed other advantages."

"In this place," said Mrs. Bennet, "and in all other places through life, I have been wonderfully blessed, my good cousin. I have taken many a review of my life, since I became an inmate here. Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life! What an instance of the Lord's tender care was it that I should marry as I did! Mr. Bennet was even in his unchanged state as kind a husband as ever lived. And how wonderful it was at the last that he should be so powerfully drawn towards God as to give up his public way of life for the purpose of knowing him more and loving him better. Think, Mr. Goodman, what my condition would have been had he kept up the Rose till his death, and left me in possession of it. In that case I should assuredly have kept on the business, and perhaps have finished my days in that house, in the midst of all the bustle and hurry of that way of life. O what a misfortune might it have proved to me, had I remained there in a situation so full of snares, where company and good

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living were at my command at all times! O, cousin, cousin, I tremble to think of it. And then again, had the Lord allowed me my own way about my beloved Rachel, what would her situation have been now, had she lived and married an unprincipled young man! How different would have been her situation, I say, compared with what it is now, in glory everlasting, never changing glory! And then, to think how the great work of salvation was wrought for my husband and child wholly and entirely through the mercy of God, unsought by them, and undesired by me! Surely, Henry Goodman, you have not in all your experience met with a case like mine. I may indeed be compared to the labourer, who having wrought only one hour in the Lord's vineyard, was made equal to those who had borne the burden and heat of the day. But I have not wrought even my one hour; I have never done any thing for my Lord; I never can do any thing; and yet the Almighty showers down upon me the best of his blessings, and satisfies me with every precious thing."

It cannot be doubted that Mr. Goodman was much astonished to hear these words from the lips of the same person who, a little less than three years ago was ready to charge Providence with injustice for those very dispensations which she now considered as real blessings. Not being informed of the change in her character, thus wonderfully wrought by regenerating grace, and having more fresh in his mind by far than she had the unsatisfactory conversation he had held with her in his first visit, he could hardly restrain his expressions of amazement, while he gazed upon her with mute astonishment. But observing that her countenance was calm and placid, and that the expression of her eye was meek and lowly, as she lay reclining upon her pillow, he began to feel a persuasion that her heart was really changed, and that she truly felt all she expressed. However, he thought it right to try her with some searching questions respecting the ground of her faith, as well as relating to the sense which she had of her own accumulated guilt and utter helplessness.

She hearkened to him a while in deep silence, when bursting into tears, and clasping together her sallow and emaciated hands, she exclaimed, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief!"

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Pleased with these expressions of humility, Mr. Goodman was filled with thankfulness, and could not forbear exclaiming, in the triumph of his feelings, "O my God! I thank thee; my prayers, my unworthy prayers, have indeed been heard for this my poor afflicted friend: for she was dead, and is alive again—was lost, and is found."

He then proceeded to point out to Mrs. Bennet that which had most struck him in the two conversations which he had held with her. "You perhaps," he said, "do not recollect the tendency of our first discourse, because you spoke then only as you always spoke; all you then said consisted of complaints respecting your hard destiny: and it is remarkable that you then pointed out those very events of your life as being the most cruel inflictions of Providence, which you have numbered this day among your greatest mercies. I need not name what these were; but I wish you to observe this circumstance, as it indicates, I trust, that blessed change in your own mind which must take place in every one before he can be admitted into the kingdom of God. For it is written—*Unless a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven:* and certain it is, that when the heart is changed, that which before was sweet to the natural man becomes bitterness to the saint, and that which was gall and wormwood to the natural man becomes full of sweetness to the regenerate creature. Hence the servant of the Lord is enabled to rejoice evermore: he no longer puts darkness for light and light for darkness, nor bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter; but he rejoices in hope, is patient in tribulation, and triumphant in death."

The little party, thus assembled in their humble garret, united in a prayer, which was led by the excellent Mr. Goodman; after which the holy man tendered his purse to his afflicted cousin, afflicted indeed in the body, but blessed in the spirit. His offers of this kind were not, however, accepted, as Mrs. Bennet made it appear that she had sufficient left for all her necessities.

From that time Mr. Goodman frequently visited his poor cousin, and received every desirable evidence of her daily growth in grace, until the bitterness of death was past, and the redeemed soul received into everlasting glory.

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And now, my reader, let us look to ourselves, and inquire whether we are not still in the number of those who put light for darkness, and bitter for sweet; and let us give all diligence to shun the woes denounced against characters of such a description.

END OF THE BITTER SWEET.

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COMMON ERRORS.

In a small town in Gloucestershire there lived, about thirty years ago, an industrious man, by name John Wilmot, who maintained his wife and only son by keeping a small shop, in which he sold needles, thread, pins, laces, and other such small articles.

This man was a quiet, inoffensive person, but unfortunate in his wife, who, though a tidy, hard-working woman, was very self-willed, and so full of pride on account of the cleanliness of her house, together with her saving management, by which she enabled her husband to put by a few pounds every year, that he had no little to suffer from her imperious temper.

Mrs. Wilmot was a tall, bony, hard-featured woman, and, inasmuch as she had passed her youth without falling into any of those grievous offences so frequent among the lower orders of females, whose sense of morality and decency, I am sorry to say, is for the most part exceedingly slight, she failed not to hold herself very high upon the notion of her extraordinary virtue, not unfrequently telling her husband, and especially whenever he offended her or complained of her temper, that she only wished he had taken some one of her neighbours to wife, since that might have taught him how to value a virtuous woman. And as Mrs. Wilmot prided herself on her morality, so she entertained a high opinion of her religion; since she was a constant church-goer, and brought the text home every Sunday the year round.

I have before intimated that John had an only son, whose name was Joseph; a boy who had been of a weak constitution from his childhood, and who, in consequence of his inability to go out among other boys, had been always at home with his mother. Mrs. Wilmot had as little tenderness in her nature as any woman can be supposed to possess; nevertheless, she had a great affec-

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tion for her son, he being, as she often represented the matter, a part of her own flesh and blood: in consideration of which she indulged him to the utmost extreme which her circumstances would admit, waiting upon him hand and foot, and pleading his want of health for these extraordinary indulgences. She allowed him an easy chair, and the warmest seat in the chimney-corner; and by pampering his sickly appetite with every nicety within her reach, she confirmed that weakness of constitution which better management might, perhaps, have removed.

When a healthy lad is improperly indulged, he very soon makes his parents feel the ill effect of such treatment, by breaking out into excesses. But this was not the case with Joseph Wilmot. His infirmities compelled him to stay at home, and his weakness obliged him to be quiet; so that as all his comforts depended on his mother, he naturally clung to this parent. And though he was sometimes fretful and impatient, yet, as I said before, that very weakness which made him fretful, prevented him from breaking out into any excesses of riot or disobedience; insomuch that he was generally considered by his neighbours as a good son.

As Joseph Wilmot advanced in age without acquiring strength, he became fond of reading, as one means of passing away the time without weariness. And as his mother, who was herself very ignorant, entertained the common persuasion of illiterate and unenlightened persons, that reading of any kind, no matter what, must be a kind of religious exercise, she became more than ever confirmed in the opinion of her son's merits, often making her boast of his good life, and strict observance of every duty.

In the mean time the young man advanced in years, and being thus constantly restrained from open and glaring transgressions, he displayed that selfishness which is natural to the unregenerate man, in a spirit of censoriousness against those vices from which he was himself withheld by the peculiar circumstances of his case. This formality was, however, much admired by his partial mother, who verily believed that the bitterness with which he spoke of the sins of his neighbours was a proof of his own purity of mind and hatred of vice.

In the mean time his constitution became gradually weaker, till he was at length laid upon his bed with the

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severe attack of a disease to which he had long been subject, but which now appeared to threaten his speedy dissolution. It is one thing to look at death at a distance, and another to view it close at hand. The natural man shrinks from death with inconceivable anguish; but the servant of Christ, when this object of universal dread draws nigh, clings closer to his Saviour, with an humble assurance that he in whom he has long trusted will support him in this last conflict. But Joseph, buoyed up with the idea of his own good qualities, had never felt the necessity of a Saviour, and was therefore utterly destitute of such a helper as the dying man must ever feel the need of, unless indeed he be numbered among those of whom the Psalmist saith, "The wicked have no bands in their death;" to wit, those obdurate sinners who die as they have lived, without a single thought of God or of the future world.

Joseph, however, was by no means so hardened as the persons above described; so that when death, as I before said, looked him close in the face, he became very much dejected, and gave utterance to his terrors in a manner so distressing, that his mother, finding herself no longer able to sooth and console him by her usual expressions of commendation, ran out into the street and brought in with her a certain old woman, who was held in high esteem in the town as an attentive and skilful body about the sick, and one who was said to have a mighty comfortable way of talking to dying people. This old woman, whom we shall call the Widow Barclay, or Nurse Barclay, such being her usual appellation in the neighbourhood, was engaged at a wedding when Mrs. Wilmot came to call her: hearing, however, that the occasion for which she was required was of a melancholy nature, she immediately cast her countenance into a serious mould, and following Mrs. Wilmot to her house, she failed not to utter several audible groans as she ascended the stairs to the sick man's room. Persons in the dejected situation in which Joseph Wilmot found himself at that period, are ready to catch at every shadow of comfort. Accordingly, the young man, at the sight of the old lady, raised his languid head, and holding out his hand, "O Nurse Barclay, this is kind of you, indeed," he said. "I am very ill, very low, very much afraid of death. Tell me, what must I do? I fear things will go hard with me at last."

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"Go hard with you! dear young man," said the widow, drawing up her head with a peculiar air, not seldom used on such occasions; "if it is to go hard with you, what is to become of thousands and tens of thousands of poor sinners?" And then turning to his mother, who stood by, "I say, Mrs. Wilmot, what is to become of thousands and tens of thousands if it is to go hard with this good young man at the last day?"

"Very true," returned Mrs. Wilmot; "and I have said the very same to him a hundred and a hundred times. Why, the poor dear boy speaks of himself as if he had been a common housebreaker, or worse, when I his mother can vouch for him that he has led the best of lives, and never injured man nor beast."

"O, mother, mother," said Joseph, with a deep sigh, "how can you talk so! are we not all sinners? does not the Prayer-book say so? and yet you will have it that I have no faults."

"Faults!" repeated the Widow Barclay: "no, no, Joseph, your mother does not pretend to say that you have no faults; that is not what you mean, is it, Mrs. Wilmot?"

"No, no," returned Mrs. Wilmot, "I did not mean exactly to say that Joseph has never done a wrong thing; that perhaps might be saying too much, because you know no human creature is altogether without a fault: but this I can say, that there never was a better son than my poor lad there; and I would say it, if need be, in the face of all the world."

"There, now," said the widow, exultingly; "there, Joseph, hear what your mother says: if she does not know you I cannot tell who does."

"I can," said Joseph; "I know one that knows me better than my mother, and that is myself: whatever my mother may say, I know that I have many faults."

"Faults again," repeated the widow, interrupting him; "to be sure, child, you have had some faults: we grant you, that it is true enough, all are sinners; but God is too good to punish his poor creatures for a few faults: the Almighty is very merciful, and will be sure to forgive you."

"O," said Joseph, "but though my mother counts me religious, I know that I have not been so: I have lived until now without any knowledge or thought of God; and though I may have led a more moral life than some

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men, yet I feel that this neglect of my duty to my Maker is alone sufficient to condemn me."

"Pooh, pooh," said the widow, tossing up her chin, "who has put such thoughts in your head? I don't see but you are quite as good, after all, as some people who make a mighty stir and outcry about religion, filling one's ears with their hymns and prayers."

Joseph was silent, for indeed he felt himself overpowered by the volubility of the old lady's tongue: on which she, turning to his mother, said, "Poor dear lad, how he does but talk! I am certain sure he has had sufferings enough in this world to prevent his fearing any thing for the next; at any rate, it cannot be said of him as was said of the rich man in the Testament, that he has had all his good things in this life."

"So I tell him, so I tell him," said Mrs. Wilmot, sighing, "and so I have told him over and over again: if I have said it once, I have said it twenty times; he has had troubles enough, poor soul, that he has; troubles enough to make up for all his sin. If ever anybody was afflicted in this world, I am sure it may be said so of him."

"There now," said the widow, turning to Joseph with an air of satisfaction, "do you hear what your mother says, my boy?"

"I do hear," replied the young man, sighing; "I do hear it; but how my sufferings can atone for my sins I cannot understand. All the sufferings I have endured I have deserved; ay, and I deserve a great deal more, that is, if the Lord should deal with me according to my sins, and reward me according to mine iniquities."

"There again," said Nurse Barclay, lifting up her eyes and her hands, "do you hear, Dame Wilmot, how the poor boy talks of his sins and his iniquities, poor innocent soul?"

"Innocent soul!" repeated the sick man: "you will not talk of innocent souls, Mrs. Barclay, when you come to be in my situation; at least I hope you will not. There are no souls innocent but those of the faithful, who have been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb."

"Who are those you are talking of?" asked the widow.

"Those," returned Joseph, "who have been brought to the knowledge of Christ, and have received him into their hearts by faith."

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"O, there you are again got upon your high doctrines," replied the widow: "such doctrines may be very well for those who have learning, but for such ignorant folks as we are, how can we be expected to understand them? Ay, Mrs. Wilmot, is it not so? It is no matter what we are, provided we are sincere; we are then safe enough."

"Sincere!" said Joseph, with a deep sigh: "but I have not been sincere."

"*Not sincere!*" repeated the mother; "why, Joseph, my boy, your trouble puts you beside yourself."

"No, mother, no," replied the young man, "I am not beside myself; I perhaps never knew myself so well as I do now—I tell you the truth: I have hitherto lived in hardness of heart, in contempt of God, and in separation from Christ."

"Why, child," said the widow, half angry, "if God did not give you grace to be pious, how was you to help yourself? You did as well as you could, I am sure you could not do more."

"I did not do as well as I could," returned Joseph, with a degree of peevishness which he could no longer restrain: "do you presume to charge the Almighty with injustice? If I had not grace, did I use the means to obtain it? What does the Scripture say? 'Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God.' No, no; if I perish, it is all my own work: I have done ill, and, I know it; and I fear that I shall eternally rue the consequences of my wicked life."

"Do not be so hot, so impatient, my lad," said the widow, sitting down and taking his hand, at the same time looking significantly at his mother. "Well, well, we will grant all you require: you have been a naughty lad, and now you are sorry for it, and this blessed repentance will put all right. What does the Bible say? 'Repent, and you shall be forgiven.' Is it not so, Mrs. Wilmot? You cannot do better than repent: you must try to make yourself better, that is what you have to do: you must make yourself fit to be saved, and then, you know, for the sake of your repentance all will be forgiven you." So saying she shook his hand, and promising to return next day, hastened down stairs to return to the party she had left, saying to John Wilmot, as she hurried through the shop, "I found your son very low, Mr. Wilmot: he would have it he was a grievous sinner, and when I would have proved the contrary, he

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got so hot that I was forced to let him have his way; and so I talked to him a little on the subject of repentance, all as if he had been one of the worst of sinners, poor dear innocent soul; where can he have got such gloomy notions of religion?"

John Wilmot, who was preparing fourpenny balls of worsted from a large skein which he had before him, ceased to twirl his reel, and lifting up his eyes with his usual dulness of comprehension, said to the sprightly widow who stood before him, "Thank you, Mrs. Barclay, you are wonderfully kind to all sick folks; and so you think my poor lad needs repentance?"

"Repentance!" repeated the good woman, "you quite misunderstand me; John Wilmot, how could you think that I should say any such a thing? only sick folks, you know, must be humoured; there never was a better lad on earth than poor Joseph; and there is not, I am sure, a more innocent lad in all our town."

"So my wife says," returned John, winding again, while the busy dame bustled out of the shop.

In the mean time poor Joseph begged to be left awhile alone, in order to give way to those confused and miserable feelings which the discourses of his mother and Mrs. Barclay had in no small degree tended to increase.

We may compare Mrs. Barclay, and other ignorant comforters of the same description, to those mistaken teachers spoken of in Ezekiel xiii. 10, 11. "Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there was no peace; and one built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar: say unto them which daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall."

Poor Joseph lay without comfort on his bed, after his mother had left him, till sunset, which did not happen long before nine o'clock, it being the height of summer. At this time she returned again to bring him his supper, saying that she would have come before, only she fancied he might be asleep. He took his supper from her, and begged to be left again as soon as possible. "Why, child," said Mrs. Wilmot, "what is the matter with you to-night? I never saw you in such a way before; you are quite unsociable, and will take no comfort from any one. I brought the Widow Barclay to see you, and even she could not please you."

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"No, mother," said Joseph, "it was not likely she should, talking after such a fashion as she did."

"Well, well, child," returned the mother, "let me settle your pillow, and put your bedclothes comfortable, and then I will leave you; and I hope by morning you will be better satisfied." So saying she departed.

Poor Joseph, being left again, was filled with so many unpleasant thoughts that it was impossible for him to sleep. The night was exceedingly sultry, and Mrs. Wilmot, by her son's request, had left the window open nearly at the foot of his bed, promising to come about midnight to shut it. As the young man lay propped up on his bed, his eyes were continually fixed on the prospect which presented itself through the open window. The room in which he lay had a western aspect; and that part of the sky where the sun had disappeared still retained a faint glow, all else seeming buried in obscurity. Right between this glowing part of the sky and Joseph's window stood the parish church, the figure of which, as well as those of the yew-trees in the churchyard, was distinctly marked by the faint light behind them, and together they suggested no very pleasant thoughts to this poor young man, who was now lying on his bed of sickness, a stranger to redeeming love, and overwhelmed with the fear of death. Poor Joseph having laid for a while looking on this scene, at length broke out in lamentations—"Oh, death! death!" he said; "he must have a stout heart indeed who can look on death, and that which may follow death, without fear. In a few months, or perhaps in a few weeks, my poor body may be laid in that churchyard; and then where shall my soul be found, laden as it is with sin? Can I hope to be forgiven? God is indeed merciful, but he is also just and holy; what, then, is to become of me?" The poor young man then began to weep and sob so audibly that his father and mother, who were in the next room, came running to him; and his mother declared that she would leave him no more that night: so, laying herself down on the outside of his bed, she continued to repeat to him such words of comfort as her erroneous notions of religion suggested, till the sick man, being entirely worn out with fatigue, fell into a disturbed sleep. The first request which Joseph made to his mother in the morning was, that she would send for the minister of the parish.

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"Oh, Joseph!" said the poor woman, in great alarm, on hearing this request, "you terrify me! surely you do not think of dying! Do you feel yourself worse? shall I call the doctor?"

"No, no," returned Joseph, peevishly; "no, no, mother, call the minister; beg him to come; and if you have any love for me, do let me have my own way in this matter. Don't talk to me any more as you did last night—it makes me worse and worse. You will have it that I am not a sinner—that I am a good lad—that I may be sure of going to heaven for my good works; while my heart and my conscience tell me quite the contrary—and this is a kind of contradiction which I cannot endure."

"Contradiction!" repeated the mother; "was ever any thing like that, to accuse me of contradicting you? Why, now, I ask you if I have not been the most indulgent of mothers? and I take this very ungrateful of you, Joseph, to say that I contradict you." Thus saying she burst into tears.

"O, mother," said Joseph, much touched by her tears, for he had never before seen her so affected, "do not cry; do not grieve about me; you have been a kind parent to me; I did not mean to distress you. But if you love me, do send for the minister."

Mrs. Wilmot, though very unwillingly, now submitted to her son's desire; and going out immediately, soon returned with the minister, who was happily one of those wise and faithful servants who make it their only business on earth to do their heavenly Master's work. When this excellent man was introduced into Joseph's room, and had taken his seat by the young man's bed, he put several questions to him, in order to obtain some little acquaintance with his character before he entered into any particular discourse with him.

"Sir," said Joseph, "I am full of concern about the state of my soul. I know that I must die soon, and I fear my actions will not stand examination at the last day; though my mother tells me, she is sure that if I am not saved it will go hard with multitudes; and I hardly know myself what to think about it, since I certainly have led a more moral life than most young men; though that may be partly owing to the check which my infirmities have laid upon me."

"My dear young man," said the minister, "beware

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of thinking that you must be saved because you are not so bad as some others. Observe what the Scriptures say of all mankind: 'There is none that doeth good, no, not one.' Rom. iii. 12. 'All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' Rom. iii. 23. 'The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.' Gen. viii. 21. Now wherefore, my young man," proceeded the minister, "wherefore do you suppose that these strong declarations of man's depravity are used in the Bible, but in order that every mouth may be stopped, and every man be constrained to plead guilty before God? Your being free from the gross sins which some commit will not excuse you for the pride, the evil thoughts, the carnal desires, the secret sins, of which you, as well as I, and every son of Adam, have been guilty. If we have been better outwardly than some others, it is more owing to the care of our parents and the restraining grace of God than to any good in ourselves. Be assured, therefore, that in the eyes of a just and holy God we are all counted unclean and utterly vile."

Joseph sighed, and looking hard at the minister, said, "How then, sir, am I to be saved?"

"Not by any thing that you can do," replied the minister; "for, if your being better than some others would save you, why should Jesus Christ have lived a painful life, and died a shameful death, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself? My dear young man, you must either wholly part with your supposed merits, or with the Saviour himself. You must either consent to be thought a sick man, or send away your Physician."

"O, sir," said Joseph, "then will I confess myself to be diseased, and apply to my Physician."

"I am glad to hear you make this declaration," said the minister, "because I am convinced that no man is disposed by nature to apply to the heavenly Physician. No man cometh unto Christ unless he is revealed to him by the Holy Spirit. And inasmuch as God the Spirit is all-powerful, I cannot doubt but he will accomplish that work in you which, I trust, he hath already commenced."

"But, sir," said Joseph, "am I to understand that the Lord counts all sinners alike? God is merciful, I have often heard it said; and I was yesterday told that he was too good to punish any one for a few faults."

"O how little," said the pious minister, "do they

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know of the human heart, who speak of the transgressions of the best of men as of a few pardonable errors! Man naturally hates God, and flies from him as from an enemy. Remember our Lord's words to Nicodemus, who was not only a moral, but an excellent character: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'" John iii. 3.

"But, sir," said Joseph, "there are some, as you well know, sir, in our town, who talk much of this new birth, and of other such matters, whose lives are a disgrace to their profession; and when I have seen and heard such persons, I have often thought what my mother and others say, to be strictly true."

"But," said the minister, "you must tell me what your mother says before I can explain your doubts respecting her assertion."

"Why, sir," said Joseph, "she says that she does not see but that those who do not pretend to religion are quite as good, for the most part, as those who make such a noise and stir about it."

The minister replied, "Notice the parable of the pharisee and publican, which the Lord Jesus Christ spake to some who, like your mother, trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others. Self-righteousness is natural to the human heart, but it is founded in ignorance of God's holy law. By this holy law God will judge you, and not by comparing you with other sinners. All are sinners; and, be assured, that the only way of escape for any is, by flying for mercy to the Lord Jesus Christ. If all the good works that ever were done could be performed by one individual, they could not procure the pardon of a single sin, or make atonement for one breach of the law."

"Then, sir," said Joseph, "if good works will not atone for sin, have we nothing of this sort to hope for from our sufferings? I have been a great sufferer from my youth."

The minister replied, "My dear young man, the Word of God will not allow us to imagine that the sufferings of a sinner can atone for sin. A sacrifice, in order to be acceptable to God, must in the first place be without spot or blemish; and, in the second place, it must be voluntary. What we suffer in the body we suffer not voluntarily, but in consequence of our sins: we cannot, therefore, place any confidence in our sufferings, be-

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cause they are deficient in every point which can render suffering effectual to salvation. And seeing this to be the case, we must look for a Saviour whose sacrifice is at once pure and voluntary: and, praised be God, such a one is nigh to every sinner, expressly declaring that 'whosoever cometh unto him, he will in nowise cast out.'"

"Ah, sir," said Joseph, "these are comfortable doctrines; but as I am a poor man, and no scholar, I fear that such matters as these are above me. Mrs. Barclay told me but yesterday, that religion may be very well for those who have learning, but that the want of it would be overlooked in a poor ignorant man, such as I am."

The minister replied, "It is written, 'All thy children shall be taught of the Lord.' Isaiah liv. 13. And St. Paul shows that it is not by man's wisdom or learning that he can know any thing of God. 1 Cor. i. Many promises of instruction are given to those who seek the knowledge of the Lord; and a divine teacher is appointed for such, whose communications have power to convey light and knowledge to the most dark and ignorant heart." Then taking up Joseph's Bible, which lay on a little table near the bed, he marked with his pencil the following among other passages for the young man's consideration: "Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way." Ps. xxv. 8, 9. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John iii. 19.

The young man thanked the minister heartily for this kindness, and said, "You have given me much comfort, sir, and taught me to see things in a new light. I used to suppose that if *I was but sincere, I was safe; and that if the Lord did not give me as much grace as he did to others, it was not my fault.* But I perceive that I then had no sincerity, nor any desire for grace."

The pious minister answered, "My young friend, the errors which you have been led to discover and confess are particularly common among ungodly persons. As to your views of *sincerity*—there was a time when the apostle Paul 'verily thought with himself that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.' Acts xxvi. 9. He was sincere, no doubt, but in

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a wrong cause; till, being stopped short by the grace of God, he became a most zealous defender of that Saviour whom he had persecuted. The apostle, referring to this passage of his life at a later period, speaks thus: 'I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am.' 1 Cor. xv. 9, 10. 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.' 1 Tim. i. 15, 16. And to that other erroneous sentiment of yours, namely, *that you cannot have grace if God vouchsafes it not*, I make this reply—*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* Moreover, while you are presuming to charge your Maker with injustice, are you diligently using those means of grace with which you are favoured? If not, it surely becomes you to lay your hand on your mouth."

"Sir," said Joseph, "I heartily thank you for all your condescending kindness. You have assisted to set me right on many important subjects, and I now see how vain a thing it would be for any man to attempt in his own strength *to work out his own salvation*."

"My dear young man," said the minister, "I thank God that you have been brought to this reasonable conclusion; concerning which I may say to you as our Lord once said unto Simon, 'Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee; but my Father which is in heaven.'" The minister then proceeded to set before him a striking outline of the great work of salvation as it is set forth in the Holy Scriptures; very earnestly admonishing him daily to ask wisdom of the great Father of lights, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.

Poor Joseph shook the minister heartily by the hand, and, with tears in his eyes, requested that he would often repeat his visits—and I am happy to add, that it pleased the Lord so to bless the instructions of this worthy minister to the poor invalid, that he died at length in the blessed assurance of acceptance with God, through the merits and death of his Redeemer.

END OF VOLUME VIII.

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